

# HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

**The Jesuit Educational  
Center for Human Development**



**When Ministry Becomes Therapy**



**Spiritual Growth Through Adulthood**



**Prejudice in Religious Congregations**

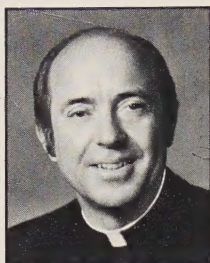


**Developing Leaders for the Church**



**Qualities of the Feminine Mentor**





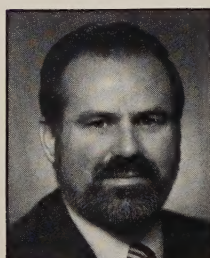
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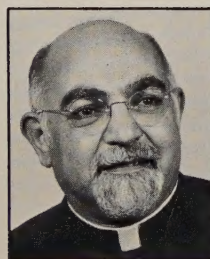


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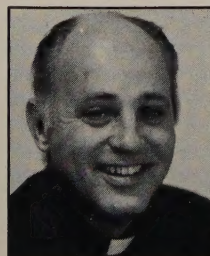


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# HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
EDITORIAL BOARD _____	2
INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS _____	2
EDITORIAL _____	3
A Time for Choosing to Love	
AUTHORS IN THIS ISSUE _____	4
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR _____	5
DEVELOPING LEADERS FOR THE CHURCH _____	6
George Eppley, Ph.D.	
ARE RELIGIOUS ORDERS IRRELEVANT? _____	9
Paul Michalenko, S.T., and Loughlan Sofield, S.T.	
SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN ADOLESCENCE AND ADULthood _____	14
William F. Kraft, Ph.D.	
PREJUDICE IN RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS _____	24
Jean Alvarez, Ed.D.	
THE FEMININE MENTOR IN WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT _____	31
Marie Beha, O.S.C.	
MOSES AS A LEADERSHIP MODEL _____	34
James Fitz, S.M.	
WHEN MINISTRY BECOMES THERAPY _____	36
Donald Cozzens, Ph.D.	
THE WISDOM OF SEEKING HELP _____	40
Sister Mary J. Cairns	
AUTO BIO (MERCIFULLY BRIEF) _____	42
James Torrens, S.J., Ph.D.	
BOOK REVIEWS _____	44

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## INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

The editors are pleased to consider for publication articles relating to the ongoing work of those involved in helping other people through religious leadership and formation, spiritual direction, and counseling.

Manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate to the Senior Editor, Linda Amadeo, P.O. Box 789, Cambridge, MA 02238. Copy should be typewritten double spaced on 8½ × 11 inch white paper, 70 characters per line and 28 lines per page. Manuscripts are received with the understanding that they have not been previously published and are not currently under consideration elsewhere. Feature articles should be limited to 5,000 words with no more than 10 listings in the bibliography; filler items of between 500 and 1,000 words will be considered. All accepted material is subject to editing.

Authors are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of proper names in both text and bibliography. Acknowledgments must be given when substantial material is quoted from other publications. Provide names of author(s), title of article, title of journal or book, volume number, page(s), month and year, and publisher's permission to use material.

Illustrations, if any, should be submitted as high-quality, glossy, unmounted black-and-white photographic prints. Do not send original artwork.

Letters are welcome and will be published as space permits and at the discretion of the editors. Such communications should not exceed 600 words and are subject to editing.

Book reviews, which should not exceed 600 words in length, should be sent to the Book Review Editor, Jon O'Brien, S.J., D.O., Jesuit Community, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. 20057.

All submissions should be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

Editorial Office: (617) 547-1250



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# EDITORIAL

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## A TIME FOR CHOOSING TO LOVE

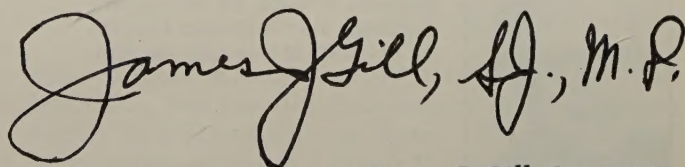
**T**here must be a way to talk about the sunset of one year and the dawning of another without merely exclaiming how quickly the old year flew by. There must also be some way to watch a movie on TV without automatically proclaiming one's annoyance about the interruptions for commercials. And there just has to be a way to step indoors on a blustery winter day without immediately telling everyone how terribly cold it is outside. But if it is in fact possible to refrain from making such unimaginative and predictable statements, you would never discover it by listening to the usual spontaneous expressions coming off the tongues of most of us humans. Our minds are as programmed as any computer, and day after day we mercilessly inflict on one another our verbalizations about practically everything that is obvious.

The parenting we received and the culture that shaped us helped to make our personal thought processes operate in habitual, socially conditioned ways. But so does the weather determine our mental responses, we have recently been told. Scientists doing research on the effects of climate have reported that high temperatures give rise to angry thoughts and aggressive behavior, whereas rainy days trigger gloomy reflections that accompany (and perhaps bring on) feelings of depression. Low barometric pressure, they have discovered, produces ideas and impulses related to anxiety and restlessness, unlike sunshine, which stimulates positive thinking and sociable, even charitable, behavior. Warm, dry winds make problem solving difficult, and when negative ions abound in the air

(e.g., at high altitudes or when lightning strikes), the attitudes and moods of most people are found to improve.

But we are persons, not instinct-driven and unfreely behaving beasts. No matter how many people around us speak in clichés about superficialities and act in exasperatingly predictable ways, and however unfavorable the ions, winds, and thermometer readings may be, we can still deliberately will to think the kinds of original thoughts that can generate (in ourselves as well as others) very positive feelings and deeds—of gratitude, kindness, generosity, and love.

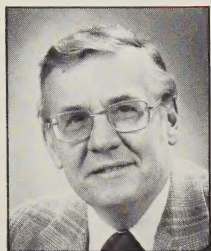
The wish I have in my heart for all our HUMAN DEVELOPMENT readers this present Christmas and New Year season is that each of you will be given by God daily throughout life one of his most precious gifts—an ever-growing ability to look beyond every gray cloud, dark night, heavy cross, upsetting situation, or obnoxious behavior and see our Creator's hand holding out to you an opportunity to choose to think and act in terms of faith, hopefulness, patience, and love, instead of automatically reacting with discouragement, resentment, hostility, or complaints. Your repeatedly manifesting such a positive response in the face of adversity will spiritually enrich our world by providing a model for the lives of those blessed with the chance to know, love, and learn from you. Wasn't it to teach us to fulfill this role with him that the Lord came to dwell among us beginning at Bethlehem?



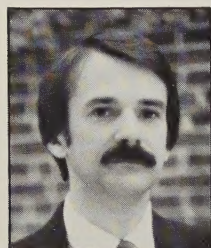
**James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.**



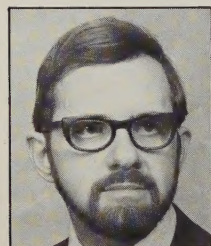
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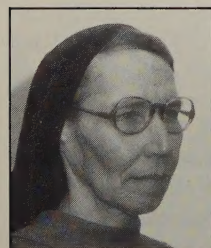
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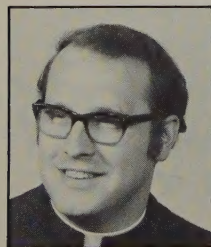
William F. Kraft is Professor of Psychology at Carlow College, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



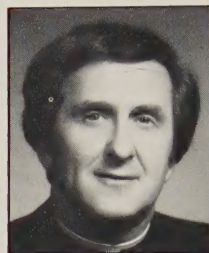
Jean Alvarez is a psychologist and organizational consultant who has been working for the past six years with religious congregations in the areas of social justice and chapter preparation.



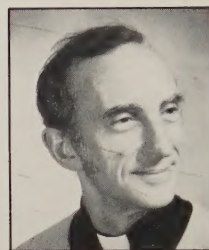
Sister Marie Beha is Directress of Formation for the Poor Clare community of Greenville, South Carolina. She has held this position since 1975.



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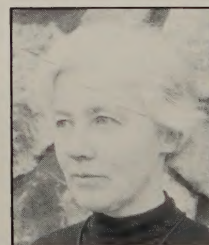
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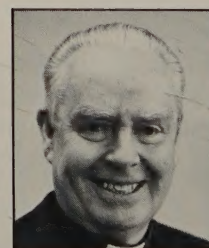
Father James Torrens, S.J., is Professor of English at Santa Clara University, California.



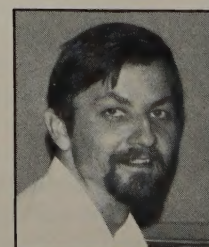
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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Double Standard Again?

There was a curious statement in Fr. Vaughn's article "Sex and the Midlife Crisis" in the Summer 1983 issue. In discussing the extramarital affair of a wife, he says, "When the affair is discovered, the husband is likely to be more deeply hurt and to take it more personally than she would if she had discovered him in an affair." How was the judgment made? Were there objective criteria and a good sampling?

Could it have been the identification of the male counselor with male clients? It sounds like the opposite of a statement I could have made after my first year of counseling. I hope it's just that and not an attempt to perpetuate the remnants of the old double standard.

Elizabeth Galbraith, r.c.  
Wayzata, Minnesota

## Port Chaplains Face Injustices

I write this letter requesting permission to reprint the article in the Summer 1983 issue "Hunger and Thirst for Justice Manifest Spiritual Health" by Marian Cowan. In our work as port chaplains we are uncovering so many problems of injustice, people not being paid, illegal deductions, unsigned contracts, and all of the other rotten things that some people can do to other people in the interest of personal greed. Some of our chaplains have real problems about how to get involved in resolving these injustices. I feel that Sister Cowan addresses this problem as well as anybody that I have seen.

Father James Dillenburg  
National Director  
Apostleship of the Sea  
in the United States  
Pensacola, Florida

## Celibates Not Necessarily Lonely

I received the Spring 1983 issue of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, and the first article I read was "Celibacy's Holy Loneliness" by Father Kevin Codd. I really question the direction and basic assumption of the article. I do not feel I need to be celibate in order to discover loneliness, and I have not chosen to be celibate for that reason. To me, loneliness is a negative experience that is not something I look for or dive into in order to discover fullness. I think that it's toward life and intimacy that we are called. Jesus did not come to teach us about loneliness; he taught us about being in relationship with his father, our fellow man, and ourselves. If solitude is a better word for the loneliness the author is talking about, it still does not fit the suffering and somewhat hopeless tone of the article. I guess I can

compare it with my work with depressed people. If I choose to be depressed with them in order to show them that I understand and am with them in their experience, not only will I not be giving them hope but I will also be helping them get a lot more depressed.

On the whole, I guess I was left with a very negative feeling about celibacy after reading the article. I am convinced that celibacy can be a very positive experience that is far from being lonely.

Laura Reitsma, S.S.C.J.  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

## Compassion's Continuing Effects

As the person responsible for the 7200 individuals who make up United's flight attendant work force, I was gratified to learn of Father Gill's impressions of the unusually empathic flight attendant he observed. We are indeed fortunate to have such a flight attendant in our employ.

We plan to share Father Gill's editorial ("Calvary's Lesson Taught in the Sky," Spring 1983) with other flight attendants in training. Certainly, not every human being is capable of the deep understanding that was shown by this flight attendant. However, this incident serves to illustrate the potential for growth in understanding and empathy, and the potential in the flight attendant job for creating the "beautiful experiences that could be theirs in the sky," as Father Gill so eloquently states.

Diane M. Sena  
Vice President, Inflight Services  
United Airlines, Chicago, Illinois

## New Handbook for Parishes

Here in the Pacific we are a bit behind in our reading up on current events. I just finished reading about Brother Loughlan Sofield's ministry in the Winter 1980 issue. I relished every word of your interview ("Tomorrow's Lay Ministry"), and I'm hungry for more.

You mentioned in the article that your staff was preparing a book for publication to help pastors etc. in the task of developing lay ministers. I would be grateful if you could give me information on where to obtain a copy of this if it has been published.

David L. Andrus, S.J.  
Ponapee, Caroline Is.

*Editor's Note:* Brother Sofield, with Sister Brenda Hermann, has just finished writing *Developing the Parish As a Community of Service*. This handbook is available through LeJacq Publishing Inc., 53 Park Place, New York City, 10007. The cost is \$12.



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# Developing Leaders for the Church

GEORGE EPPLEY, Ph.D.

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**L**ast fall my wife and I were driving to Cape Cod for a two-week vacation. Rolling down the interstate toward the Cape in heavy Sunday afternoon traffic I suddenly looked in the sideview mirror and noticed a small black sports car bearing down on us at a high rate of speed. Although he shot by us at 80 m.p.h., we could not help noticing that his vanity license plate advertised that the car's owner was FR. JOE. My wife Anita said rather mischievously, "Father Joe is probably on a sick call."

That evening at the Cape we watched a television film "Knight Rider," about a former police officer who is shot in the head and left for dead. A mysterious philanthropist rescues him, engages a medical trauma team to save his life, and gives him a new identity through plastic surgery and a futuristic car—black like Father Joe's—to aid him in his war against crime. The recurrent theme behind the series is that one good, intelligent, honest man—with a futuristic car—can make a difference in a world of violence, lust, and greed.

Later that evening I fell asleep and had a dream. In it, the bishops of America asked me to establish a national center for continuing education for priests and gave me unlimited funds for programming and the operation of the center. I dreamt that

I recruited 40 priests for the first session, which lasted six months. I hired a first-rate faculty and exhorted them to conduct intensive classes in scripture, theology, liturgy, homiletics, and canon law. The results were phenomenal. The priests "turned on" to education. After graduation, I said goodbye to them and watched them dash to their black Trans-Ams and Corvettes in the parking lot. I heard them rev up their engines and lay down rubber. As they zoomed into the sunset, I could still read their license plates: FR. MIKE, FR. PAUL, FR. JIM, FR. STASH, FR. BOB.

A wild and absurd dream. Wild, because responsible executives would never give unlimited funds to any project, even one so worthy as a center for continuing education of priests. Absurd, because the programming is all wrong. Crash courses in theology, scripture, and ecclesiology are important, of course, and their importance should not be lightly dismissed. But recruiting 40 or 400 priests for a six-month intellectual head trip is not, in my judgment, what today's priests need. Such an experience would give most priests a sense of *déjà vu*. They might be tasting the new wine of theology, but it would be from the old familiar flask of seminary life.

This is not to deny that there is a place for con-



tinuing education that stresses the cognitive. Certainly the modern priest must keep abreast of what major theologians and scholars in scripture and canon law are writing. This can and should be done through courses, workshops, and seminars. Much more, however, is needed. I believe that what priests need to do is to learn how to become effective leaders in the christian community.

In our society there is a longing for a leader—some great charismatic figure who will solve our complex problems and make things right again. Every four years Americans express this longing when they choose a president. If that president does not perform economic miracles, the first term will be the last.

A paragraph from a recent New York Times book review is germane. In his review of two books on the presidency, Thomas Cronin rebuked White House reporters who persist in fostering the myth that *only* the president can solve problems, *only* the president can set our national purpose. Cronin, a professor of political science and himself an author of a book on the presidency, wrote:

My own view is that we need all the leadership we can get from presidents, but we are even more in need of a *nation* of leaders, say 500,000 or even 5 million, in business, local government, unions, universities and elsewhere who will serve as policy clarifiers, agenda setters and renewers of national purpose.

In the church a similar myth prevails. Many priests, along with religious and laymen, believe that *only* a pope or bishop can solve problems, *only* a pope or a bishop can set purpose. To paraphrase Cronin, we need all the church leadership we can get from popes and bishops, but we are even more in need of a church of leaders drawn from priests, religious, and laypersons who will serve as policy clarifiers, agenda setters, and renewers of purpose for the church.

## LEADERS NEED BROAD VISION

If we were to examine how bishops, priests, and major superiors attained their present positions of church leadership, we would find for the most part that many achieved them through specialization in some discipline such as canon law, theology, education, finance, management, or administration. While this process has produced many excellent leaders, it has also produced leaders who did not always have the vision to see the larger needs, interests, and problems of the total community.

Successful leadership for tomorrow will require more than specialized competence. Tomorrow's leaders must have the flexibility to anticipate change and to cope with uncertainty.

Most dioceses, colleges and universities, religious orders, and congregations presently have men and

women who in the near future will assume executive leadership positions. Such organizations have generally recognized the talents and abilities of these people and have tracked them onto career ladders that could lead to the top. But what is being done now to develop the community leadership potential of these men and women who will soon be top leaders of dioceses, universities, religious orders, and congregations?

Undoubtedly, these emerging leaders will have the ability to function well in their organizations. But will they have the vision and the skills to work with other community leaders in solving the complex problems of society that, if unaddressed and unsolved, will continue to negatively affect all segments of the community?

The development of potential leaders is too important to be left to chance. Experiencing and surviving tough chancery or university politics is valuable, to be sure, but in itself it does not prepare the person for an effective leadership position in the wider christian community.

## THE REFLECTIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Those who are concerned about developing church leadership for tomorrow would do well to examine the Reflective Leadership Program at the Hubert Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota.

The Reflective Leadership Program is not a degree program. It is, rather, an intensive and expensive nine-month live-in program for people who are about to assume leadership responsibilities in business, the military, government, labor, and education. Participants come from all regions of the nation and parts of the world to interact with each other, with faculty, and with guest lecturers such as Walter Mondale, Barry Goldwater, John Gardner, and Theodore Hesburg.

The program requires nine months of commitment to hard thinking. During that time, each Leadership Fellow experiences the following tailor-made activities:

- An integrated reflective leadership seminar (a common experience for the whole group)—a creative inquiry into the nature, content, technologies, purpose, ethics, and personal qualities of leadership in democratic societies
- A chance to work with others in policy research of mind-stretching complexity
- An incentive to enhance and deepen past learning with new knowledge and insights

## SEMINAR CONTENTS RICH

With first-rate thinkers and practitioners as moderators, seminar participants wrestle with the many qualities of leadership. Corporate participants hear and critique leaders from government



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## Tomorrow's leaders must have the flexibility to anticipate change and to cope with uncertainty

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and nonprofit organizations. Participants from government agencies and the independent sector come to terms with corporate thinking about public policy. International moderators and fellows mingle with Americans and work together to achieve a global perspective. Sessions on leadership, the global agenda, the information society, the impact of new technologies, military defense, and world security are complemented by specially prepared readings and projects, such as case studies, mock hearings, and simulations.

### POLICY PROJECT

Major problems call for a team approach. Drawing on the entire faculty of the University of Minnesota, the Humphrey Institute has developed its own policy research center, a think tank to clarify complex decisions. Each Leadership Fellow is encouraged to join a team researching topics such as

- Power sharing among private, public, and independent sectors
- Rethinking human resources
- The causes of criminal violence
- Rethinking juvenile justice
- Community leadership development
- Modernization and human dignity

The Humphrey Institute's Reflective Leadership Program could be a model for a national leadership program for the Catholic Church in America.

Although initially it would be good for some bishops, potential bishops, religious superiors, and Catholic college presidents and vice-presidents to enroll in the Humphrey Institute's Reflective Leadership Program, I believe that the global agenda for the state is not necessarily the global agenda for the universal or the national church. For that reason, a separate institute for the church is necessary. This is not to say that there could not be sharing and dialogue between the two. In view of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' position on the morality of nuclear war, such sharing and dialogue could be extremely productive.

A feasibility study could determine whether such an institute could become operational and finan-

cially viable. Questions such as funding, control, location, curriculum, and faculty all need to be addressed. Readers of *HUMAN DEVELOPMENT*, I am sure, would have many excellent suggestions concerning these questions, in addition to topics for the global agenda that the church of tomorrow must face.

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

If such an institute could be translated from concept to reality, my hope would be that the following features would be incorporated:

1. A first-rate faculty that would include not only theologians and scholars of scripture but also a psychiatrist, a psychologist, an educator, a nutritionist, and specialists in music, drama, art, and literature

2. Carefully selected participants not only from the clergy but from women and men religious and the laity (If the church thinks of leadership for tomorrow in terms of male clerics primarily, then it will not exert much leadership in the future)

3. Curricula and programs that would anticipate what the future will be like for the church of the twenty-first century

4. A year's commitment from participants who would be free from parish, school, or chancery duties and obligations (including weekends) so that they could devote themselves to prayer, reflection, reading, classwork, seminars, discussions, and hard work

5. An ecumenical dimension through ongoing dialogue with Protestant and Jewish leaders about mutual problems and concerns

6. Carefully structured experiences on coping with loneliness, managing stress, and coming to grips with sexuality and the aging process, and creating recreational opportunities through drama, art, music, literature, and gourmet cooking

7. Group process exercises that teach skills in problem solving, conflict resolution, assertiveness, and advocacy

Would it be too costly for the Catholic Church in America to establish such an institute for priests, sisters, and laypersons who are now or who will soon be in executive leadership roles? Would it be too costly annually to gather together into a think tank some of the best talent and brains from all segments of the church?

I maintain that it will be much more expensive not to. When James Rouse designed Columbia City, Maryland, *Life* magazine quoted him as saying, "Let us always consider the optimums and forget about feasibility. It will compromise us soon enough. Let us consider what we could be and be stimulated by it." An institute for leadership and human development is, I believe, an optimum for the church that faces the future. I hope that we will not only be stimulated by it but motivated to bring it about.



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# Are Religious Orders Irrelevant?

PAUL MICHALENKO, S.T., AND LOUGHLAN SOFIELD, S.T.

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**T**his article offers some criteria for assessing the current relevance of religious orders. These measures are based on our own experience and beliefs, so readers should not accept them unquestioningly. Rather, they are offered as a starting point for reflection and discussion.

Before listing our proposed criteria, we want to offer a word of caution. Honesty demands an examination of the actual, lived values, the "ministry," not just the stated values, the "mission," of any order. Most religious people would, of course, assert that ministry and mission are the primary goals of their institute, but often this is not evident in the choices they make. Their decisions frequently seem to be aimed more toward institutional maintenance and the avoidance of community conflicts than in the direction of fostering the work of the Lord.

The following criteria in no way imply a condemnation of the past. If religious orders had not been relevant throughout their history, they would have died. We are recommending that institutes realistically study what is needed to better accomplish their mission in *this* time and place. Applying new criteria does not imply a criticism of those that were appropriate in the past.

We propose the following criteria for reflection and discussion:

1. The primary goal of religious orders and congregations at the present time is to be enablers of ministry, rather than doers of ministry.

2. Members of apostolic religious institutes (in conjunction with other persons with whom they are engaged in ministry) must develop an apostolic spirituality.

3. Community life must free people for ministry and foster inclusion of others who are not members of the institute.

4. Religious institutes, including all of their individual members, need to become truly "pilgrim people."

5. The energies of the institute and its members need to be directed primarily toward ministry.

## MINISTRY OF ENABLEMENT

Persons who join religious institutes do so because they believe they are responding to a call from God to dedicate their lives to performing ministries needed for continuing the mission of the church. In the past, individuals joined a particular order or congregation primarily to perform traditional ministries within the context of a school, parish, hospital, or social service agency. Generally, a belief was prevalent within the church that those who entered these institutes were the only



people especially called to serve and were the only ones capable of ministering to the larger body of the faithful.

The church depended on the people in religious orders to be the doers of ministry. Formation programs in each of these institutes prepared their young members for this role. Religious, just like the diocesan clergy, became experts at doing ministry. In fact, in many instances, their sense of self-esteem was determined by how much ministry they performed for others. Their institute often reinforced this way of measuring. Those who were the busiest doing ministry were usually the most highly esteemed and affirmed members.

The custom of rating a person's value in community according to the amount of ministry performed for others continued until the Second Vatican Council challenged religious to reevaluate their approach to ministry. This challenge, embodied in the Council's *Dogmatic Constitution of the Church*, accompanied a new understanding of the church as the People of God. The ramifications of this ecclesiology were spelled out even more precisely in some of the church's post-Vatican II documents that stressed the call of all Christians to both holiness and ministry. Among these, the *Revised Code of Canon Law* (1983) even speaks about the rights of the laity in this regard.

The church's directives have profound implications in relation to the primary ministries of religious institutes. Whereas many religious have affirmed their belief in this new ecclesiology, there appears to be a gap between that avowal and the translation of this belief into practical, concrete changes in behavior. In many parts of the world, the rhetoric expressing this new understanding of the laity's role in the church has exceeded the corresponding action. There is scant evidence that religious institutes have realized that acceptance of the church's teaching would effect major changes in their approach to ministry.

The challenge to religious today is to discover and then implement ways of moving from simply doing all the ministry to enabling all the members of the church to assume their rightful, God-given role in ministry. If religious orders are to be relevant, we believe that their members, who collectively constitute less than two percent of the people in the Christian community gifted by God for ministry, should begin to see their principal role more in terms of discerning and developing the gifts of the entire Christian community and less in terms of primarily providing direct ministry. They should assist the laity to find ways of using their gifts in ministry and provide them with the supports necessary to carry out their Christian vocation to the fullest.

Among the major efforts in ministry that we believe religious institutes should now make are the following: proclaiming the good news that all are called to ministry; offering opportunities for the

development of faith, the source of all ministry; and creating viable structures for Christian communities, as supports for those engaged in ministry.

## STATISTICS SUGGEST ACTION

Vatican II theology about the People of God certainly did not impel all religious institutes to undertake immediate changes in their ministry, but reflection on currently available statistical information has begun to force many orders and congregations to do so. They are becoming aware that during the last decade, the Catholic population in the United States grew by nearly 30 percent. This remarkable increase occurred while the church was experiencing a sharp decrease in the number of priests. There were 10,000 fewer of them in 1980 than in 1970, a decrease of 18 percent. One province of religious women had almost 400 members six years ago. Research suggests that they will have only 84 members available for active ministry in the year 2000. The remainder will have died, retired, left religious life, or become involved in internal service for the institute. A worldwide institute of religious brothers with 18,000 members in 1965 had fewer than 10,000 in 1980, a decrease of 40 percent.

Those orders that have been realistic enough to face such facts have been able to reassess their ministerial commitments and make the necessary adjustments in their apostolic planning and deployment of personnel. Failure to face reality will continue to contribute to the irrelevance and demise of some institutes. Most of the groups that have engaged in such research have made the appropriate adjustments. They are in the process of accomplishing the transition from being only doers of ministry to fulfilling their role as enablers of all in ministry. Many institutes that have failed to look at the realities or have been unwilling to make the necessary transition are discovering that virtually all of their energies are being directed mainly toward ministries of self-maintenance.

In contrast, when a number of communities have responded to the challenge of the Second Vatican Council to reexamine the charism of their founders, they have rediscovered that at its origin their order or congregation was intimately connected with a group of active lay persons who participated in the institute's ministry.

Today, numerous individual religious, as well as entire institutes, are coming to a renewed and deepened awareness of the rightful role of laity in ministry. One senior sister recently told us, "I spent much time praying for vocations to our community because I saw how old we were getting. I kept thinking God never answered my prayers, but now I can see that I was blind to the many vocations God was sending me through all the Christian people he put in my path."



If religious are to make the transition from being doers to becoming enablers, their institutes must prepare their members for this change. This preparation will take place on two levels. Initial formation must provide candidates with opportunities to develop the attitudes and skills needed to become enablers. Older members of the order must be offered similar opportunities for continuing education and ongoing formation to help them feel comfortable and competent in their transition to becoming enablers.

## APOSTOLIC SPIRITUALITY

Most religious communities have been steeped in monastic spirituality. Built predominantly around the liturgy, this type of spirituality is a highly structured life of common prayer and work within a monastery. But what seems needed today more than ever is an *apostolic* spirituality, one that includes an ability to encounter God in the everyday circumstances of life. As we move through the 1980s and 1990s, contemplative and monastic spirituality will need to be balanced by an apostolic spirituality, cultivated in the midst of active service for others. Such a spirituality (sometimes called "incarnational") will emerge only when laity and religious enter into serious dialogue, bringing to the discussion the spiritual insights that result from the experience of both groups.

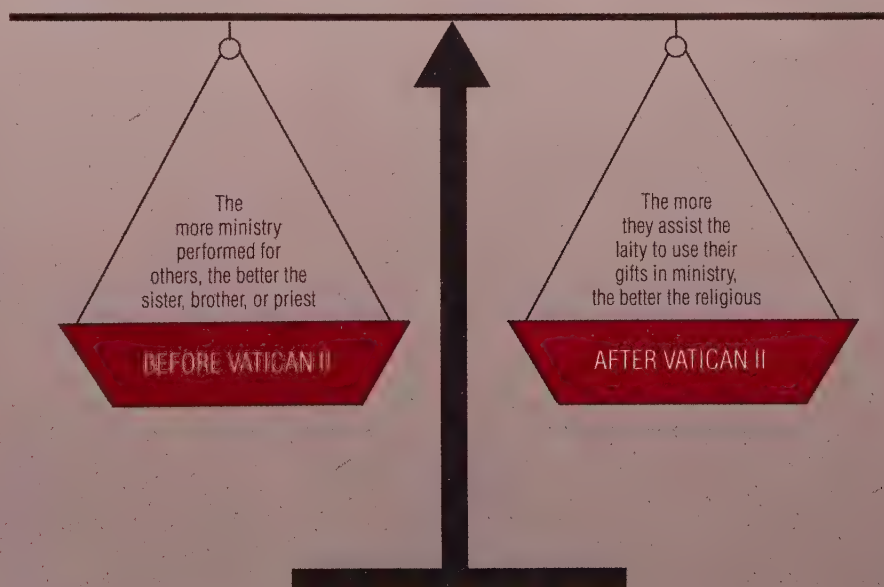
Religious have had unique opportunities over the course of years to focus on the development of their spirituality. Lay persons, on the other hand, have developed an apostolic spirituality in the midst of

an active life, without having an opportunity to escape to a less hectic milieu in order to discover the Lord. Religious, then, need to develop an openness that allows them to be influenced more by laity in developing and deepening their apostolic spirituality.

If religious continue to function with a spirituality that only runs parallel to that of the laity, they will become an increasing enigma to them. We recently experienced an excellent example of this. While conducting a workshop for a group of lay people, religious, and clergy, we discussed the topic of apostolic spirituality. The clergy and religious entered into an intellectual discussion of the subject. We noticed that the laity gradually withdrew from the exchange. When we inquired into this behavior, we discovered that the laity felt inadequate. They did not understand what the religious and clergy were talking about. So we asked the clergy and religious to be silent and listen to the laity. Their doing so provided an opportunity for a group of simple, rural lay persons to recount a series of profound, personal, spiritual experiences. The clergy and religious sat in awe, hearing for the first time these gifted people share their deep, at times mystical, experiences of the Lord. At the end, when we evaluated that workshop, many of the religious and clergy commented that the most valuable part of it had been the time they had spent listening carefully to the laity who were describing their own spiritual experiences.

Religious need to provide opportunities for laity to influence their spirituality from the time of their entrance into religious life. Simply count the

## RATING A PERSON'S VALUE IN AN ACTIVE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY





number of lay people currently involved in the initial formation program of your institute. Although the majority of time in active ministry will be spent with lay persons, religious still continue to be formed, molded, and trained almost exclusively by other religious.

Before making their final profession, members of one religious institute recently asked a laywoman to direct their retreat. They were deeply impressed by her honesty and prayerfulness. Retreatants and director discussed together their varied expectations, fears, and styles of interaction. The result was a better awareness of the roles religious and laity can fill together in building the kingdom. They all came to realize that religious should be trained for ministry among and with laity, and that lay persons' observations, input, and guidance are essential for effective, relevant ministry.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

Community is a gift given to religious by the Lord to help them grow as persons and as ministers. It should be an eschatological witness, a sign of the future time when all persons and things will live in intimate harmony with our Creator. If community becomes a place of dissonance rather than a center of support and nourishment, it cannot help interfering with the mission of spreading the gospel.

We observe that viable apostolic communities reveal two essential elements: a high degree of inclusivity and an environment that frees its members for ministry. By inclusivity we mean the ability of a community to incorporate a variety of people. Many communities are beginning to experiment with new styles of living that attempt to include others. We recently asked a group of novices to envision their community situation fifteen years from now. None of them could foresee an isolated community comprising just religious brothers, sisters, or priests. They pictured their future lives and ministries as being intimately connected with the laity, and their community as incorporating laity in a way that no longer set barriers between them and religious.

Another aspect of this inclusive community model is that it encourages members to seek some of their enrichment and growth outside the religious community. Communities of this type believe that diversity of experience allows greater enrichment of the individual members. The community is also improved by its members returning with new ideas, insights, and experiences. Communities that discourage this mobility become closed systems obsessively and narcissistically focused on themselves exclusively in a very self-destructive way.

The second essential element of a viable apostolic community is its ability to free its members for ministry. Community exists for the sake of mis-

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**The challenge to religious today is to move from doing all the ministry to enabling the laity to assume their God-given role in ministry**

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sion. When community life becomes the major preoccupation of an apostolic community, that community has lost sight of its primary goal, ministry. We are advocating a balance. People who join religious institutes have a right to expect that some of their needs will be met by their local community. However, when local communal issues continually drain away the energy and time needed for the apostolate, the community has become dysfunctional.

Institutes have an obligation to assure that their members receive adequate training and formation to lead effective community and apostolic lives. They also need to hold communities accountable when the communal life becomes so time-consuming that it prevents its members from maintaining their commitment to ministry.

## PILGRIM PEOPLE

Pilgrim people are those who, blessed with a spirit of detachment, are capable of moving wherever the Lord calls them. A few years ago we were privileged to be present when a provincial superior challenged a large group of religious to respond to the invitation to be pilgrim people. She suggested that whereas mobility was contributing to the breakup of the American family, immobility was contributing to the breakup of the American religious institute. She decried the tendency toward attachment to persons and places that interfered with religious' freedom to move wherever the gospel called. Her challenge to those present was "Get up and move!"

Two further clarifications need to be made regarding the goal of becoming a pilgrim people. One is related to the religious vows of poverty, celibacy, and obedience. Ultimately, this is what the vows are all about: they guarantee freedom so that religious can be available wherever they are needed to make the kingdom come alive.



The second clarification concerns responsibility to the christian community where one serves. If the aim of full-time ministers is to develop the local community to the point where they can move on to spread the gospel elsewhere, there is a resulting responsibility incumbent on these ministers. Their obligation is to anticipate and prepare for their own departure by means of explicit long-term planning that includes identifying lay leaders and then adequately training them to be self-sufficient. Too often we have seen christian communities left paralyzed by ministers who moved on without adequately preparing the local community to provide for its own spiritual and ministerial needs.

This process can be compared to the process of therapy, the goal of which is freedom, i.e., helping people to become confident in taking responsibility for their own lives. Therapy is successful when the person experiences a sense of freedom, confidence, competence, and independence from the therapist. Similar criteria exist in ministry. Ministers have been successful when they can move on, leaving behind a group of capable, confident, free christians who will miss them but are secure enough in their ministry to let them go.

To become a pilgrim christian people capable of letting go and embracing something new demands a great deal of maturity and a deep spirituality. If religious orders are going to challenge their members to this ideal, they must also provide them with opportunities for the personal development of each individual. They must prepare them to deal in mature, growth-producing ways with the experiences of termination, separation, and loss that are inevitable in the lives of pilgrim people.

Institutes and individuals need to ask themselves if they are secure enough in their faith to be continually mobile. Frequently, religious are fearful of letting go and allowing God to begin anew with them in a new place. Often, too, institutes are unwilling to drop traditional ministries that provide comfort, security, and emotional attachment but no longer respond to the pressing needs of the time and culture.

## **DIRECTION OF ENERGIES**

In our work with orders and congregations we have helped them assess their vitality by asking them to examine how their time and energies are

invested. Many institutes spend an inordinate amount of time on issues of government and initial formation. Healthy groups, by contrast, commit themselves to ongoing spiritual development and ministry. When they assemble to engage in dialogue, their primary concern is spirituality and ministry. Healthy groups also invite others who are involved with them in ministry to join them in determining directions for further growth.

Another method for assessing the health of an apostolic group is to study the content of their house meetings. Healthier groups use their time together to discuss gospel issues and concerns that are more global and other-centered. Less healthy groups are preoccupied with internal, minute details of communal maintenance. Religious communities lose their credibility with the larger christian community when they challenge others to become more other-centered, while they themselves remain short-sighted and self-centered in their way of life.

## **SUMMARY**

Are religious orders and congregations irrelevant? We don't think so; but we believe that unless they ask themselves certain crucial questions and determine the criteria they will use to evaluate their replies, they are in danger of becoming irrelevant. Institutes are on the road to irrelevance when they continue to produce only doers of ministry instead of ministers who can enable the entire People of God to use their ministerial gifts. They will become irrelevant if they retain a spirituality that separates them from the rest of the People of God; if their community life drains their energies rather than frees them for greater ministerial activity; if they do not have the courage to develop the local church and move on in a missionary spirit; and if they remain selfish and inwardly directed, while challenging the larger christian community to a more self-sacrificing life.

We urge our readers to reflect on these criteria for measuring the relevance of their institute, to develop criteria of their own, and to share their insights with us by writing to HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. Letters from readers may be directed either to us or to the editors. They could be of great value to religious orders and congregations all over the world.



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# Spiritual Growth in A

**B**efore the mid-1970s, publications on adult life-cycle development were relatively sparse. Since then, such writings, along with intense personal investments in adult development, have been burgeoning. Ten years ago courses on life-cycle growth were rare; now they are extremely popular. Most approaches to the life-cycle, such as the contributions of Roger Gould, Daniel Levinson, Gail Sheehy, and George Vaillant, along with those of Erik Erikson, deal almost exclusively with the physical and psychosocial dimensions of growth and development. Few contemporary models accent the spiritual dimension of adolescent and adult growth.

I propose to outline a theory of spiritual growth through the adolescent and adult phases of the life-cycle. I will describe dynamics of spiritual growth throughout adolescence, young adulthood, established adulthood, midlife, middle age, and the elderly years. I invite the reader to explore with me some of the problems, challenges, and possibilities of the spiritual life-cycle—to journey through our deserts and our promised lands.

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

We were born to be pilgrims and prophets, exploring and proclaiming the meaning of life. Rather than being “grown up,” we are always growing up, always journeying and uncovering new horizons of meaning. Although our physical and mental developments often peak and dissipate, spiritual growth never peaks. Our spiritual life is a dynamic process of infinite possibility that challenges growth, evokes hope, and engenders happiness.

Many assume, however, that adulthood is the time when we should finally “arrive,” when we should be “grown up,” content, secure, and happy. In fact, the opposite is often true. Adulthood, like childhood and adolescence, can be a time of dynamic growth. In an age when many assume that self-fulfillment and self-control are static attainments, we have difficulty accepting life as a continuing pilgrimage toward an ever-deepening spiritual reality that exists beyond our control.

From a psychospiritual perspective, spirituality

refers to the art of maintaining and growing in positive transrational experiences. Spiritual experiences incorporate qualities of mystery, paradox, transcendence, unity, dependence, wonder, compassion, joy, salvation, creative suffering, faith, hope, and always love, the paramount dynamic of spirituality. Spiritual experiences are linked to but go beyond the physical and psychosocial dimensions of human existence. They indicate and include, overtly or covertly, a reality that both incorporates and transcends oneself.

In these times of independence and “looking out for number one,” transcendent dependency is an important and often forgotten issue of spiritual growth. In contrast with personal and cultural forces that stress autonomy and control, the spiritual life is a life beyond our control. A life of love means surrender to one another and ultimately to God. Nothing and no one but God redeems us from absurdity and opens us to lasting fulfillment.

Another principle, often incongruent with cultural standards, states that pain is sometimes necessary for integral, creative growth. Too often, however, we are programmed to assume that pain is unnecessary or to be avoided at all cost. Although pain sometimes indicates pathological processes, it can also signal healthy and holy periods of growth. The spiritual life-cycle necessarily includes uncomfortable times, because the promised land of milk and honey reached without passage through an empty, arid desert is an illusion. We are seduced by a false promise of fulfillment when we try to bask in the promised land without journeying through the desert of pain, hopelessness, or loss.

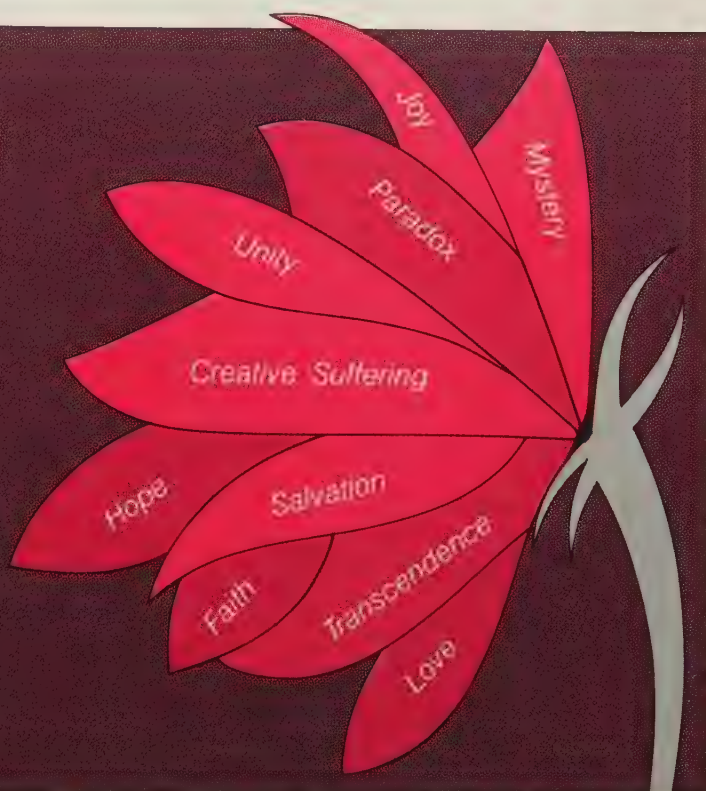
An understanding of time is also crucial to our vision of spiritual development. Consider two meanings of time: *chronos* and *kairos*. *Chronos* refers to quantifiable “clock time” and corresponds to the modern notion of isolated moments that obscure how the past and future can be existentially operative in the present. Such a static view of time impedes a dynamic vision of aging and promotes a depressing prognosis. *Kairos*, on the other hand, refers to sacred time, when the regularity and control of chronological time break down to allow more significant and transcendent experiences to occur in our normal lives. Kairotic time is quali-



# escence & Adulthood

WILLIAM F. KRAFT, Ph.D.

## QUALITIES INCORPORATED IN SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES



tative and gratuitous as compared with the quantitative and controlled "everyday" time. It is a gifted time, an opportune time, a time that embraces and transcends all seasons and ages. It is a sacred time, a time for the presence of God. *Kairos* is the end time that is a living reminder of our destiny. Adult crises are seen as kairotic events that break through chronological time to pressure us to reevaluate our use of time in order to be more available to spiritual living.

### A MODEL OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Our model of spiritual development is a sequential stage theory positing that one stage of development influences and leads to another, that these stages are fairly predictable, due to internal and external dynamics, and that such stages are linked with transitional crises or kairotic times when we

are pressured to reevaluate life. Within each state of spiritual growth, three interrelated processes occur: transition, crisis, and implementation. The transitional phase refers to the initial change from one stage of development to another, such as from young adulthood to established adulthood. It leads to the more dramatic crisis phase, incorporating a radical reevaluation of life's meaning. The crisis phase is followed by the implementation phase, a relatively more settled time, when we live out the resolution of our crisis.

To use a spiritual metaphor, the transition phase can be considered to be the threshold of a desert experience. In moving from one stage of development to another, we see the desert's vast nothingness, we hear its silent voices, we feel its phantom touch, we taste its dry sustenance, we smell its exotic aroma. It can also be a time when we turn back to slavery, stop the journey, numb the purifying



pain, and even deny the existence of the desert.

The desert experience is a crisis of spiritual life-cycle development. "Desert" comes from the Latin *serere* (to join together) and *de* (away from). It refers to a time when life is brought into radical question, when things that were normally together come apart, when a meaningful life moves toward meaninglessness. The desert experience is a kairotic time to question our use of chronological time and to wonder about what time will bring.

Like all experiences, the desert is temporary. Eventually, we emerge from more critical times and come together with ourselves and others in a more stable and secure way. This promised land of spiritual peace, however, is a temporary oasis affording some relief. Because we are on earth and not in heaven, we are never absolutely fulfilled and happy. Life is a journey through deserts and oases until we finally arrive at our destiny through death, the final crisis.

Our attitude toward these processes influences how we journey. The transitional phase, for example, usually evokes anxiety and can lead to denial, anger, or escape instead of anxious fascination and anticipation of new growth. By rejecting the desert, we eventually become so depressed or empty that we feel hopelessly lost and futile instead of experiencing deserts as strange yet familiar places where we listen to silence and expand our vision in darkness. Even in the promised land, we can lose our spirit by pitching tents in an attempt to be permanently content instead of being vigilant in building structures that promote continuing growth.

## PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT

The remainder of this article discusses some of the salient issues of spiritual growth in adolescence, young adulthood, established adulthood, midlife adulthood, middle-aged adulthood, and the elderly years. Although kairotic events do not strictly follow a chronological schedule, age ranges are given to concretize the theory and to point out general trends that are helpful in comparing ourselves with others and in preparing for our own crises. The age ranges do not indicate how long the phases last for every individual, but they indicate the period when we are most likely to have specific developmental experiences. Creative acceptance of life's settled and critical times—facing the present in faith and love, looking to the future in trust and hope, celebrating the past in gratitude and praise—is a key to healthy, holy growth.

Adolescence, when one is no longer a child and not yet an adult, offers a radically new experience of the spiritual life. Children are spiritual, to be sure, but their spiritual experiences are "pre-authentic" in contrast with later experiences. Nevertheless, the formal, everyday religious education

children receive is important for their later development. Children with little or no religious orientation may find themselves diffused in adolescence with nothing much to hold onto. Likewise, pampered children raised primarily according to need satisfaction will find themselves lacking in the discipline needed for spiritual growth.

Physical, psychological, and sexual changes mark the transition from childhood to adolescence. Because we are incarnated spirits, we change when our bodies change, and our bodily changes pressure us into a new sense of self-awareness and awareness of others. Sexuality, for instance, becomes socially oriented rather than narcissistic as in childhood.

New expectations of self and others emerge on entry into adolescence. Adolescents are expected to act more maturely. Many pressures, including future responsibility in both personal and professional vocations, begin to emerge. These physical and psychosocial changes during the transitional period of adolescence also usher in the first explicit crisis of spiritual growth.

Between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, and often in the sophomore year of high school, adolescents find themselves in a new world. Suddenly, nothing much makes sense to them. Even though they have lived no more than a decade and a half, most adolescents seem to be bored with life. While feeling stuck in this meaninglessness, they can be enticed by anything exciting and stimulating, like sexuality or drugs. For a period of time, they can numb the pain of self-discovery and feel less bored.

Anger and cynicism abound. Authority figures, especially parents and teachers, are objects of their critical vision. Since adolescents feel lost and scattered, adults who seem to know where they are going and where they stand make some adolescents anxious and angry. Although they have not yet formulated their own views, they criticize the views of others in an attempt to make sense of reality for themselves. The paramount issue is that adolescents at this time first experience the absence of authentic spiritual meaning.

In the desert of adolescence, young people feel edgy, irritable, and mopey. They have left the relative paradise of childhood and have not yet come to a more settled promised land of mid-adolescence. They find themselves nowhere and feel like no one. Nothing is clear and everything is in flux. In this wasteland, adolescents search for their identity. If all goes well, they emerge from the desert after several months or a couple of years.

## EMERGENCE IN NEW LAND

Though seemingly negative, this teenage desert pressures adolescents to find their own positive relationship with themselves, others, and the world. Soon after the appearance of the desert, adoles-



cents find themselves, around age sixteen, in a new land where nearly everything makes sense. Being lost and bored in the desert has initiated them into a new, idealistic land of enthusiasm and meaning.

New experiences occur and renewed experiences emerge. A new sense of guilt, for instance, calls for creative restitution instead of an empty apology or a selfish penance. Adolescents now feel guilty because they have violated life and universal principles, not simply because they have broken a law that brings punishment. Rather than being valueless, as in their crisis, they now begin to formulate personal values. Adolescents have given up many ways of being a child, and they begin to prepare themselves for being an adult.

Though novices at spirituality, adolescents begin to experience life in transrational, paradoxical, and mysterious ways. For example, in the moral realm they transcend the level of law and order and move to a level of love. True morality is not simply a matter of keeping the rules or of rationally judging life; morality becomes an issue of universal principles rooted in justice.

An aesthetic appreciation of life emerges as well. Nature and the arts evoke a sense of wonder and appreciation and become a source of inspiration. A sunset, the moon, a tree, or the sea are not as likely to be passed by. Literature and the performing arts touch adolescents more deeply and appeal to them transcendently.

Freedom and autonomy also take on new meaning. Freedom is not simply freedom from or a license to do as one pleases; it becomes freedom to become oneself and to help others. Adolescents who do not have a foundation of discipline, however, may find it difficult to implement their new experience of freedom. They may mistake freedom for license and become diffused rather than find their identity. Self-determination becomes a matter of doing your own thing, not living in love.

Adolescents who resolve their crisis seek religious values. Seeking authentic religious meaning, they reject passive participation and religious games. They yearn for an experience of God that has concrete and significant impact, and they demand that religion help them implement their new sense of responsibility toward themselves and others. They seek a religion of spirituality, not one of rules and business.

The period of implementation, usually between sixteen and eighteen, is the first move toward explicit spiritual living. Parents, teachers, and clergy should make the effort to foster adolescents' spiritual growth by offering structures and exercises that engender growth, for the way adolescents are treated during this time highly influences later stages of development. Clear and explicit guidelines within which adolescents can seek freedom to be themselves should be consistently presented. Unfortunately, too many adolescents are left on

their own in their reaction to past authoritarian approaches. They then lack the necessary discipline to seek an authentically free life. They are not prepared to journey the desert of adolescence and consequently never come to an authentic promised land. Many react by seeking immediate satisfaction and never confront the pain of self-emergence.

In summary, the crisis of adolescence incorporates and engenders a radical change in the meaning and direction of living. Boredom, apathy, and irritability are desert experiences necessary for spiritual emergence. Out of an apparently negative and barren land, adolescents reach a new terrain where they begin the life projects of freedom, commitment, responsibility, compassion, and love. Instead of being primarily centered on themselves as in childhood, adolescents now begin to orient themselves toward realities that exist beyond themselves, realities that make a crucial impact on living and dying. With excitement and trepidation, they continue their spiritual journey.

## YOUNG ADULTHOOD

The transition from late adolescence to young adulthood usually begins around the time of high school graduation, or about age eighteen, and brings new role expectations along with new opportunities and responsibilities. New situations like work and/or college present new value systems and opportunities that test old ones. Increased personal and social mobility evoke value confrontation and clarification. Fundamental beliefs are challenged.

The desert crisis of young adulthood usually occurs between the ages of nineteen and twenty-two and is often experienced in the sophomore year of college. Being thrown back on themselves, young adults once again take stock of life. Unlike adolescents, however, young adults reevaluate the values coming primarily from within themselves. Questions like Who am I? Where am I going? What is life all about? emerge from their past experience and point to the future.

Young adults realize that the values they choose and the commitments they now make will carry them throughout life. Commitment is radically questioned; many young adults wonder if a permanent commitment is necessary or even possible. Personal commitment in terms of the marital, single, or religious life is questioned in addition to professional commitment. Though not yet fully adult, their task is to find their pace and place in adult life.

Loneliness is a dominant feature of the desert of young adulthood. On cold and quiet nights, they ask themselves how they can give to and receive from another. Their silent pleas for intimacy seem to go unheard, and they yearn for the healing presence of another person. They realize that without love,



life becomes bland and listless. To realize that loneliness is essential in coming to love and that the desert is essential in reaching the promised land is difficult for most young adults. Many make the false assumption that loneliness and love are mutually exclusive, rather than accept them as two sides of the same reality. They never come to authentic love unless they journey through the desert of loneliness. To become spiritually mature, they must realize that the presence of another can also be revealed in absence.

At times, young adults may wonder if they will ever have anything or anyone to hold onto. They may feel sick and tired of painful loss, changes, emptiness, and absence. The paradoxical challenge is to hold onto themselves while emptying themselves for something greater. A key challenge is to delay immediate satisfaction in the service of ultimate fulfillment. Our society of self-centeredness makes it difficult to foster such discipline and easier to choose short-term comfort.

### TIME FOR SERIOUS QUESTIONING

Conformity to moral rules and social expectations are more radically questioned in young adulthood. Becoming acutely aware of individual rights and values, young adults may develop a more authentic morality and realize the final stage of cognitive moral development—one Kohlberg calls the "universal ethical principle level." Some remain fixated at the level of conventional morality, and others adopt a relativistic and self-serving system of beliefs.

Many young adults become quite critical of religious institutions, practices, and people. They are especially sensitive to phoniness, double standards, and ready-made solutions, and they may try out new religions. In rebelling against meaningless religious structures, some foster a humanistic stand rather than a spiritual one, stating that life can be authentically meaningful without a transcendent God. Actually, young adults want to be touched by religion, and they seek the experiential rather than the theoretical. They desire to be fulfilled with love rather than with ideas.

Many young adult experiences are not congruent with cultural norms. To feel lonely, for instance, is often judged to be the opposite of love, not a prelude to deeper love. Depression in the service of fulfillment is rejected, and anxiety in the service of spiritual growth is minimized. Assuming that the pain of self-discovery is negative can impede spiritual growth. Young adults have to transcend many cultural norms, and if they receive no support, their journey is made unnecessarily difficult.

Since young adulthood is a time to make personal and professional commitments, the way young adults resolve their crisis determines the way they will live in their twenties and beyond. To

run from the desert fosters unauthentic living, making an integral spiritual life an unlikely possibility. If the desert of young adulthood is traveled in an authentic way, the period of implementation during the twenties leads to a meaningful and mature life-style.

It is important for young adults to develop an interior life rather than become too outer-directed and seduced by a culture that minimizes spiritual living to foster a life that is basically a rational enterprise. Young adults should be encouraged to incorporate structures that encourage spiritual growth and to be vigilant in promoting authentic love. Rather than focus mainly on comfort and success, their challenge is to grow deeper in love.

### ESTABLISHED ADULTHOOD

The twenties can be a carefree and optimistic time, and young adults are unlikely to be aware of becoming older. But when they reach the mythical age of dying youth (twenty-nine), they come to the transition from young adulthood to adulthood. Just when life seems to be crystalizing, making permanent sense, life again becomes unsettled. Life is questioned again; in fact, questions are a main dynamic of the crisis of established adulthood. Having a history of spiritual struggle and discovery to reflect on, these adults wonder who they have become. They question the ultimate meaning of their lives, and whatever the questions, the focus is on "me."

Looking into the mirror of life, adults see a new image, a person who is no longer young and not yet old. Realizing that in less than ten years they will be past the halfway point in life, they see a person whose life energy and time are reaching a certain peak that will soon taper off. Life asks them: who are you going to be and what are you going to do with the rest of your life?

Adults take a critical look at their personal commitments. Past and present fulfillments and frustrations are questioned. They reflect on their life of love. Is love truly present? Do I really love? Am I loved? The question of changing commitments is also common. Ideally, this crisis will serve to renew and promote the commitment to love unconditionally.

It is easy, however, to silence these questions. Men, perhaps more than women, tend to be so involved in their work that the challenge to deepen and transcend their lives is forgotten. Women, on the other hand, are more likely to face this crisis and to seek more fulfillment in their lives. Particularly, women who have been programmed to draw their self-esteem primarily from service are urged to realize themselves in other ways. The spirit of life invites them to find a meaning that is beyond service.



## THE WISE CHANGE PACE

Adults in their thirsting thirties are challenged to discover and actualize more individual freedom, freedom from spiritual restrictions and freedom for spiritual fulfillment. In the desert, adults are called to seek experiences that enhance self-development, but they must be aware of the desert demons that encourage them to seek this fulfillment in social relevance and functional success rather than in spirituality. To hear the call of spirituality in a loud and busy world can be difficult. Rather than become so busy that God is forgotten, wise adults slow down and are patient in an impatient world. They take time and make space to listen to God.

Many question their ethical standards. Even "superego-less" adults who have become morally indifferent wonder what is best for themselves and others. Some continue to develop an expedient, relativistic moral system that fosters self-centeredness, whereas others, morally rigid, are challenged to become more flexible and compassionate.

Loneliness and interpersonal irrelevance are felt intensely. A dangerous assumption, particularly in established adulthood, is that people can ultimately fill our loneliness. To resolve the crisis authentically, we must admit that only God can respond ultimately to our radical call for love. Ideally, we affirm the fact that only God's Spirit can support and give us life permanently and everywhere. We realize that loneliness is a gift that presents God as not yet discovered. The loneliness of the desert is a call to seek God first, then others. Being grounded in God, we can courageously strive to love one another unrestrictedly.

The main focus of adulthood is usually functional success. Most adults work to achieve more power and responsibility and desire to make a mark in the world. It is a time of productivity rather than withdrawal, a time to cope successfully with the external world rather than journey in the inner world. Adults strive to make things happen in their professional and personal lives and to live at their peak. Their time can be an exciting and fulfilling journey, or it can be terribly frustrating. Instead of being a frantic time of activism and work, adulthood can be an optimum time for spiritual fulfillment. Death, for example, is not denied but rather is listened to as a source of life. Instead of escaping into hyperactivism, healthy adults take time out to listen to and reflect on death. Death weakens their will to power by reminding them of their radical helplessness, that life is not totally or even primarily in their hands. Paradoxically, in this vital time, death slows us down and humbles us.

Life can become a frantic and fruitless attempt to live authentically, or it can become a vital time of spiritual living. Work, personal commitment, and relationships become manifestations of spirituality. Instead of diverting our attention from

God, our everyday living becomes an implementation of spiritual values. In the midst of busyness, we can slow down and listen to, appreciate and enjoy, the beauty of life and people. We can purposely and consistently take time out to listen to the Spirit of life. We can give up the narcissistic ways of a child and become true adults and people of the Spirit.

## MIDLIFE ADULTHOOD

In contrast with other models of development, our schema makes a distinction between midlife and middle-aged adulthood. Midlife is considered to be the time between adulthood and middle age, between the ages of thirty-nine and forty-nine. Though midlifers are not yet middle aged, they are probably past the halfway point of life.

In the transition from adulthood to midlife, around age thirty-nine, we stand on the threshold of the midlife desert, and a faint but clear voice of a new season can be heard. Midlifers often get the feeling that this might be their last chance to "make it big." What is "big," however, becomes the crucial question. Some midlifers feel pressured and squeezed and feel the closure of life, whereas others are challenged to deepen their lives spiritually.

Midlifers can see death and its limits lurking in the distant shadows, challenging them to a confrontation. These desert demons laugh at midlifers in mocking tones, trying to tempt them to withdraw from the desert. Midlifers acutely feel that they probably have less time to live than they have already lived. Rather than on growing up, the focus is on growing older, which may evoke regression, a thrust toward hyperactivity, or some other form of escape. With courage and faith, authentic midlifers enter the desert to transcend the limits and to answer the demon of death with life.

The painful but redeeming desert of midlife confronts us with our deceptive and foolish selves. In this cold desert we are unveiled, unmasked, exposed. We come face-to-face with the ways we have deceived ourselves and others. This is the time when we are pressured to admit how we have not lived according to the values we have professed, how we have said one thing and have done another, how we have convinced ourselves to believe what isn't so.

The midlife desert includes a crisis of limits. Focusing on the dark clouds and denying the clear sky, midlifers can become depressed, seeing themselves as powerless and empty. Men, more often than women, feel helpless and try to become more functionally powerful in a futile attempt to escape their helplessness. Instead of responding to the Spirit of the unlimited, they hold on to limited experiences such as work, sex, alcohol, and social activities. Other midlifers try to regress to youth or to adolescence, when limits were really not an



issue, in a futile attempt to deny their radical helplessness.

The confrontation between the limited and the unlimited is the key dynamic in the spiritual crisis of midlife, and the call is to leap in faith into the unlimited. Much more than ever before, midlifers are called to accept their limits, affirm their ultimate dependency on God, and consequently transcend their helplessness. Instead of depending on their own limited security (possessions, power, or even other human beings), they surrender to the Unlimited. Depending ultimately on nothing but God, midlifers receive an unlimited source of power.

Midlifers feel vulnerable to time and realize they can do nothing to slow it down. If time has been seen only in its chronological dimension, midlifers experience time as depressingly beyond their control. But those who can experience the infinite dimension of kairo-tic time transcend their limits and their death.

Authentic midlifers discover that there is a time to listen and a time to speak, a time to fast and a time to feast, a time to mourn and a time to rejoice, a time to walk and a time to run, a time to laugh and a time to cry, a time to see and a time to be blind, a time to journey in the desert and a time to travel in the promised land, a time to live and a time to die.

## **SURRENDER IS KEY**

Paradoxically, midlifers can go beyond their limits by accepting their limits, become powerful by accepting their helplessness, and become freer by affirming their dependency. For example, midlifers come to realize that depending ultimately on others for love is futile, for only God is an unlimited source of love. To transcend our limits and be loved without restriction, we must surrender primarily to God. God, and no one else, is our saving grace. Only God redeems us—not community, friends, parents, or spouse. When we expect others to be our primary sustenance, we treat them as God and actually limit ourselves and others. We put others or another on a pedestal that restricts freedom and binds them as perfect idols. Rather, we should opt for divine dependency, which enables us to love and to be loved, the basis of community and intimacy.

Death is no longer a vague shadow; it demands to be seen and heard. The ultimate limit challenges us to discover ultimate life. Actually, listening to our own coming to death can serve as an important life force that engenders authenticity. Nevertheless, we can still deny and escape from death's summons to live eternally. Death tries to tell us that it can only be overcome with eternal life.

Midlifers eventually emerge from the desert, and once again life settles, for better or for worse. Some midlifers have learned to accept their limits, which serve as a springboard to the unlimited, whereas

others have denied or escaped them and have become terribly limited. Those who reject and escape from the midlife desert become powerless, whereas those who have journeyed through the desert tap into unlimited power.

In the midlife forties, life can become progressively transcendent in accepting and going beyond limits. Instead of unconsciously demanding or expecting heaven, midlifers celebrate being on earth—the prelude to the kingdom. They realize, for example, that the commitment to love compassionately is essential, precisely because people are limited. Such an open and steadfast love gives them direction and solidarity in living a life that ultimately makes sense.

Rather than go through the motions of living without love, healthy midlifers take care to structure their life in ways that nourish spiritual growth. They realize that in living in a culture that does not actively promote and reward spirituality, they can easily lose their spirit.

Authentic midlifers foster a "contemplative disposition" wherein they "see" more than is apparent. They experience the unlimited in the midst of daily limits. Contrary to popular illusion, in being older they have more spirit to celebrate the mystery of living with and laughing at life.

Life becomes transcendent. Midlifers accept their limits of love and foster an unconditional love. They strive to love no matter what, to embrace the limits of people along with their possibilities. Accepting their limits calls forth in them an unconditional love that heals and saves. In the midst of such unlimited love, they are less likely to hold grudges and bear resentment, and are more likely to accept their anger and forgive others. They do not love to be loved; they love for the sake of God.

## **MIDDLE-AGED ADULthood**

Sooner than we ever expected, we approach a half century of living and the transition from midlife to middle-aged adulthood. Middle agers may feel that they are long over the so-called hump of "forty" and are descending. For those who avoided the midlife crisis, coming to middle age can be devastating, for it is very difficult to deny the fact that they are closer to death than to birth. Those who have run a good race, however, stand on the threshold of the middle-aged desert with expectation.

The loss of job opportunities, their children leaving home, and the death of parents can easily evoke understandable depression. Besides such psychosocial and physical losses, middle agers can be depressed about nothing in particular. A spiritual depression, which is necessary for healthy and holy growth, emerges. Even those middle agers who have lived authentically may feel that their reason for being has deserted them. By now, how-



ever, they have the faith to accept this absence as a prelude to a deeper presence.

The challenge is to accept this existential depression as an opportunity to slow down and to reflect on and recollect life. In depression, middle agers can listen to the reality that invites them to embrace their radical poverty, a nothingness that affirms their ultimate helplessness and calls for a dependency on God. Going beyond all things by experiencing nothing, they come closer to the ground out of which all beings emerge and are kept alive. In this desert of depression, middle agers become more enthusiastic and fulfilled.

Feelings of guilt and failure may also emerge. Middle agers may feel guilty about acts that occurred two or three decades ago, or they may feel a sense of failure for having missed opportunities. Looking to the future, they feel that life is shorter than it actually is. Pent-up anger may emerge. Middle agers who over many years submitted to mistreatment may blatantly express their resentment so that they suddenly become aggressive and say no instead of yes to almost everything. Whatever the situation, many middle agers demand to be recognized.

Middle agers who were raised to minimize or repress their emotions may find it very difficult to make positive sense out of their negative feelings. Adding to the guilt is the cultural attitude that feelings like anger and depression are negative. Such middle agers need appreciation and help rather than pressure and criticism.

## STAGE FOR ATONEMENT

The crisis of middle age is a crisis of reconciliation. In the serene and silent desert, middle agers are challenged to reflect on life and to bring integrity into their relationships with themselves, others, and the world. Out of guilt, they come to forgive themselves and others. Out of depression, they come to a deeper fulfillment. Out of limits, they come to experience the unlimited. Out of resentment, they affirm their dignity and learn to be compassionate and forgiving. Out of anger, they become gentle and touching. This is the age of atonement, the time to become one with self and others.

The female menopause and male climacteric can also influence spiritual life. A normal decline in strength and endurance, alterations in physical appearance, and hormonal changes can bring the spiritual dimension into clear relief. It becomes increasingly more difficult to rely on the physical and psychosocial dimensions for ultimate meaning and deliverance. Paradoxically, middle agers can become more vital and passionate lovers when they integrate their spiritual dimension with their physical and psychosocial ones.

Death not only lurks outside our door and walks into our room, it now comes up to us, touches us

and speaks loud and clear. Death takes hold of us in middle age and asks us how we have been living our lives. The demon of death tries to fool us into thinking that life is not eternal and to seduce us into despair. Middle agers who have grown in courage can laugh at death, for they know that death is the harbinger of life.

The implementation period of middle age can last twelve or more years; it offers a long time of misery or joy. Besides being the last time of being "not old," middle age can be a joyful season to harvest and enjoy the fruit of past planting. In reaffirming and appreciating their radical dependency on the source of their powers, they give up trying to control their destiny and to save themselves; rather, they surrender to God. In faith, their emptiness is fulfilled, their helplessness engenders power, their poverty brings riches, and their loneliness evokes love.

Middle agers develop concrete wisdom that enables their judgment to be prudent rather than compulsive or impulsive. They are more likely to see the dialectic between good and evil, that it is seldom a matter of either/or. They know that virtue can build on vice and that vice can emerge from virtue. They know that even when the divine is present, the demonic is lurking in the shadows.

In reconciling themselves, middle agers deepen and enjoy community. A married couple, for example, now has more time to be together, and they take the opportunity to become closer to each other. Celibates as well as married people experience the ground of community, God. In experiencing the ground that is common to everyone, they become more intimate with everyone.

Compassion is truly broadened and deepened in middle age. Middle agers help others to bear the weight of existence by seeing the spiritual, especially where it is hidden. They know that people who exploit and manipulate are actually running away from the spiritual. Rather than bring the Spirit to them, middle agers appeal to the Spirit in them. Rather than convince them of the spiritual life, they see and affirm the Spirit in their apparent nonsense. This compassionate and contemplative view pierces through the veils of evil and madness to underlying goodness and health.

Middle agers grow in wisdom by transcending purely rational knowledge to a transrational appreciation of life. Seeing with an inner eye, they appreciate more than their senses allow. They stand in awe, give thanks and praise, laugh and cry, eat and drink with spirit. In and with the Spirit they celebrate life.

## THE ELDERLY YEARS

Many of us are programmed to think of the elderly years as the end of life rather than its zenith. Living in a culture of ageism, we can be prejudiced



against old age and thus fail to appreciate and live it fully. A biased view of old age can arouse in us anxious trepidation rather than joyful expectation. Not all the elderly, however, fulfill this prophecy of doom; in fact, many elderly people enjoy life more than we realize. The elderly years can be the most spirited time on earth, in that the Spirit of life can manifest itself more fully and integrally then. Indeed, the elderly years can be a time of feasting instead of starvation, a time for a spiritual banquet.

Our personal assumptions highly influence our final years. If we assume that old age is diminution rather than culmination, and if we deny death rather than face death with life, old age can be devastating. If we identify life with physical health and vigor or with psychological and social success, old age means living death.

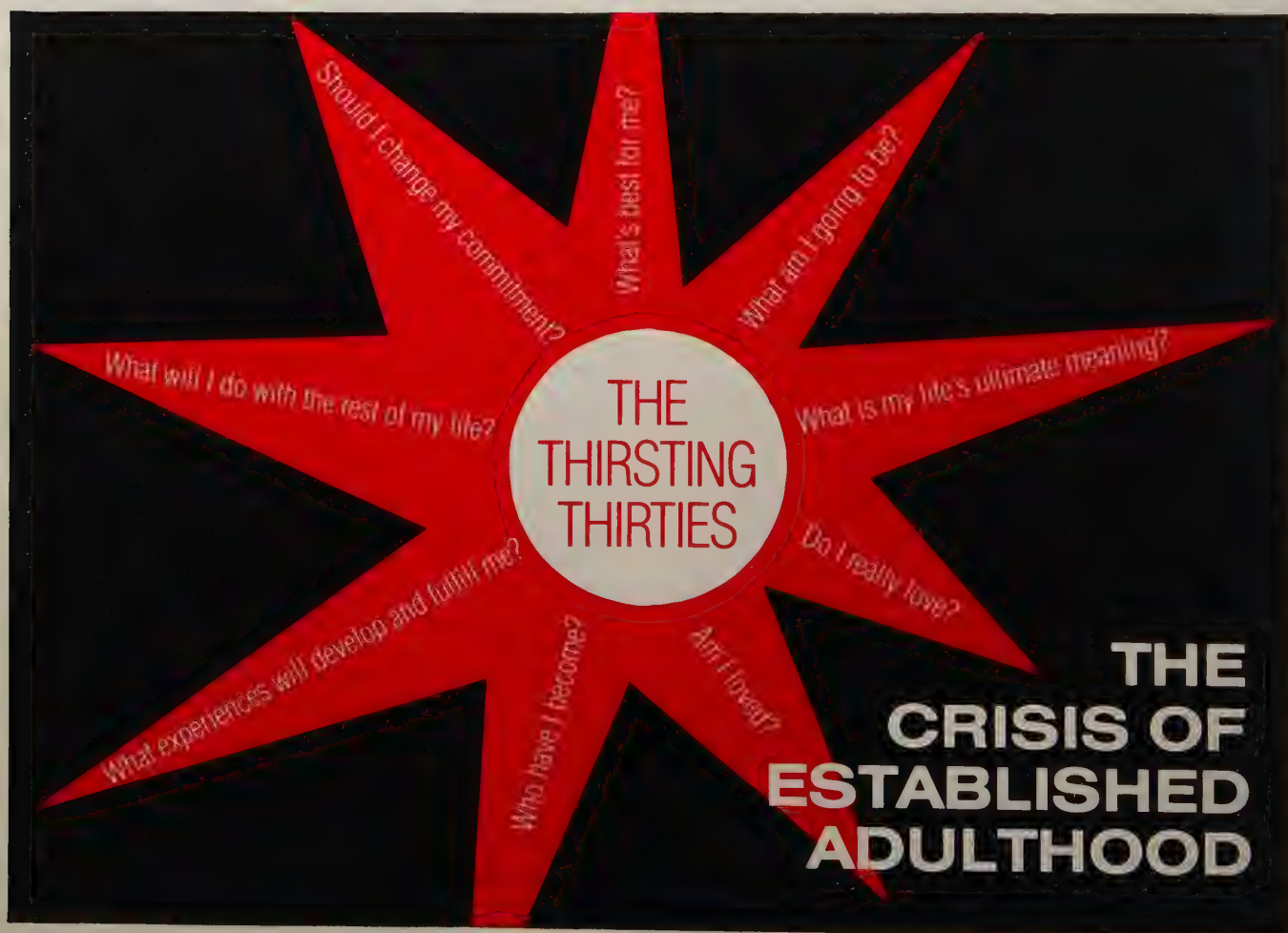
Though the likelihood of physical and social problems is high, the saving grace is spiritual transcendence. In coming to the desert of old age, usually in the mid-sixties, it is imperative to rekindle, to reaffirm, and to nourish our spiritual lives. Elderly people have to be careful of adjusting psychosocially at the expense of spiritual growth.

Becoming relatively disengaged from previous roles such as work and parenthood, however, can

help the elderly to deepen their spiritual lives. Being less pressured by the seduction of everyday living, elderly people should be freer to hear and see the Spirit in themselves and others. Being somewhat detached from normal living also enables them to see abnormally, that is, to see more than is normally seen.

A common challenge in this transition is to adjust to retirement from work. Those who have identified their life with work and have become workaholics can be thrown into a serious crisis. This crisis, however, can be their saving grace because it demands that they find meaning beyond work.

The elderly years bring the milestones of retirement and being together more with spouse or community. Becoming members of the oldest generation offers new limits and possibilities, new oppression and opportunity. Standing on the threshold of the last desert, seasoned travelers begin their journey with joyful expectation. The desert of death can look like a vast wasteland to those who have run from death. No longer can we escape the desert, for if we do, an eternal desert is promised. Life becomes meaningless and lifeless, instead of reaching its apex. But this final desert can be our saving grace; death can be experienced as a springboard to eternal life.





In our final desert journey we acutely experience the necessity of being contingent on a Supreme Being. Stripped of many of our past diversions, we can clearly admit that our redemption lies in becoming companions with the Person who is the source of our worth and being. We realize that our integrity and worth are rooted in God.

Living a life of integrity and dignity brings permanent meaning and fulfillment. Those who have become fragmented and feel displaced will minimize their dignity and possibly come to despair. But the crisis of the elderly years can be an invitation to discover our lost spirit. Those who see little sense to life still have time to affirm the present and the future, to understand and be forgiven for their past fragmented lives. In the desert of death they can come to life.

Diminished physical and social functioning add to the crisis. Still, elderly people can become more active than ever, in that they manifest their spirit more powerfully than ever. Their arthritic hands, for example, can show more spirit and beauty than their past young hands. They can touch and be touched better, can feel and respond to the embodiment of others. Embodying the Spirit, they are infinitely present and touchable.

## APPEARANCES CAN DECEIVE

A paradoxical phenomenon occurs: though their bodies look old and are old, many elderly do not feel as old as they look. They can still be young and indeed childlike. Like the child, they have a refreshing lack of pretense and face life with hope and simplicity. The elderly years call forth the spiritual infinitely more than they do the physical and psychosocial dimensions.

To love and to be loved by God is paramount. God's love is always the saving grace, especially when no one else is present. Awareness of ultimate dependence on God, which emerged clearly in mid-life, culminates in the elderly years. No matter what our physical, social, and psychological conditions may be, only God offers us permanent happiness.

Again, paradoxically, the elderly can become more autonomous than ever before if their life is rooted in their spirituality. Being dependent on the Spirit and being inspired by inexhaustible power, the elderly are freer. They refuse to play the game of being old, of being passive, dependent, reticent, and burdensome. Accepting God as the author of their lives, they become true authorities.

## DARKNESS BRINGS HOPE

The final desert can present a familiar and easy journey to veteran travelers. The elderly realize that this final dark night enlightens them and fills them with hope. They realize that this is their last

Lent before they come to their eternal Easter. Even if they have run from life, their final Lent can be a saving grace that leads to Resurrection. They must be patient, willing to wait and suffer in love, willing to stay in the desert. Otherwise, they may die without being redeemed. The elderly continue to believe that life presents Advents and Lents that promise Christmasses and Easters.

Whether this final desert be devastating or easy and familiar, they settle down for the last time. This period of implementation may be a relatively short one or it may last for decades. Facing the climax of life in death, the elderly culminate their life experience by realizing unity in themselves, in others, and in life in general. In feeling part of the whole, they transcend the whole. In spite of disease or economic oppression, the elderly break through the false myth that old age is meaningless and horrible. Refusing to succumb to a premature death or to identify life with physical activity or functional success, they spiritually dance and laugh with life.

Looking back on life, they can say that they have run the good race and have given their best. Even though loved ones may be absent, the elderly feel present to their beloved even in their absence. Even though most people may be beyond their physical reach, they still touch and are touched. Wherever and whenever they look, they see and rely on the Spirit of life. The elderly years bring an appreciation of how easy it was or could have been to be seduced by the counterfeits of the Spirit. And wise old people know that all temporary things presuppose and call for the permanent.

The elderly tell us that earth is a journey to heaven. Though moments of heaven can be experienced on earth, absolute peace and fulfillment only come after we stop dying and live forever. They affirm that instead of feeling wiped out, alienated, and completely lost, we can feel that we are finally going back home. Realizing that all of life has been a searching for and a realization of old age, we can look back with gratitude and say yes to the future.

As the journey of life nears its end and the final desert has been traveled, resting in the promised land appears on the horizon. Living in love will soon be the perfect and permanent experience of eternal life.

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# Prejudice In Religious Congregations

JEAN ALVAREZ, Ed.D.

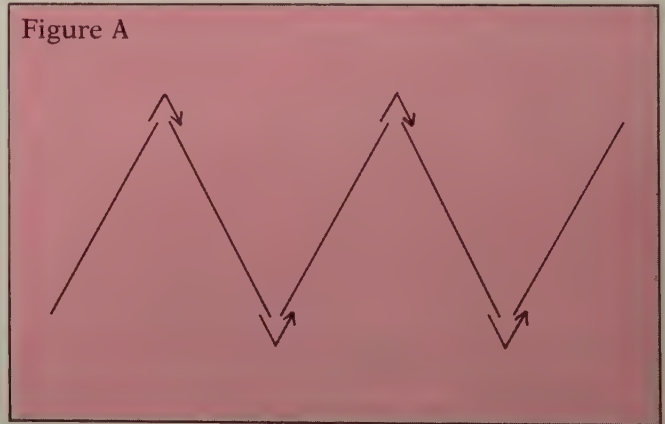
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**C**oncern about prejudice is not new in most religious congregations. But many groups have discovered that the issue is more complex and confusing than they originally imagined, and progress is painfully slow and difficult to assess. One of the reasons for this is that the very resources a congregation brings to the struggle for justice, its members, are themselves the products of an unjust culture, influenced by the myths and ideologies maintaining injustice. Members do not rid themselves of those myths and ideologies simply by making a serious commitment to be advocates of justice. The process involves moving through several stages, each stage initially seeming to be one of "no prejudice." Each is eventually left behind as the individual's developing awareness reveals that the prejudices of the stage were simply more subtle. As one moves through the stages the emerging pattern is that of reaching for successive levels of truth, somewhat akin to tacking upwind in a sailboat. This process of movement through successive levels of truth is well described by Anne Wilson Schaefer in her book *Women's Reality*.

Each new level of awareness nearly always moves in a different direction from the previous level. This means that as one grows in awareness, he or she presents a picture of inconsistency. . . . [However,

we must remember that these are] stages in a dynamic process. The movement toward greater awareness is not limited to any two levels of truth; instead it comprises many levels progressing toward more and more wisdom and understanding.

Figure A



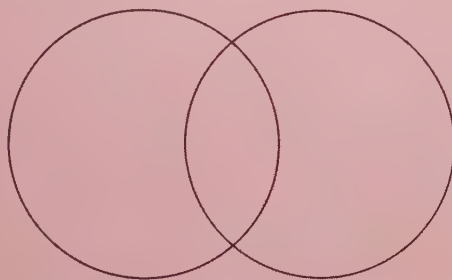
In this article, I will use the concept of levels of truth as a model to examine one of the major impediments any religious congregation must overcome as it works for justice: the deeply ingrained



prejudices of its members. I will identify five stages that describe the developing advocate of justice as he or she struggles to understand and respond adequately to questions of pluralism, whether with regard to race, gender, social class, age, sexual preference, religion, or nationality. I am suggesting that these stages are basically developmental; naming and describing them will not enable people to skip, moving directly from Stage I or II to Stage V. I hope that this model will help individuals and members of congregational administrations and social justice committees to look critically at themselves and their colleagues, to answer the question "Where does growth lie for me/us?"

In presenting this model I will rely on two concepts. The first, pluralism, is represented by a simple image: a diagram of overlapping circles.

Figure B



Whenever two groups, different in some critical way, interact with one another, an assessment is made by all group members of the degree to which the groups are similar and the degree to which they are different. In Figure B, the overlapping part identifies the areas of similarity, and the nonoverlapping parts are the areas in which each group is seen as unique.

Figure C

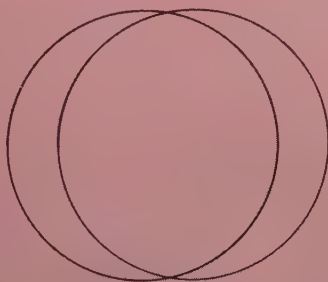
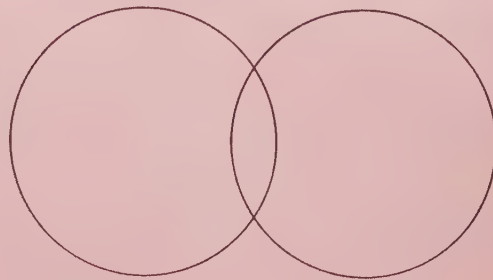


Figure D



Thus, Figure C represents two groups that are seen as quite similar (e.g., Norwegian-Americans and Swedish-Americans), and Figure D represents two groups that are seen as quite dissimilar (e.g., white American Catholic men and Iranian Moslem women).

The second concept I will use is that of "up and down," distinguishing between the group whose members are more powerful and more culturally accepted (the ups) and the group whose members are less powerful and less valued by the culture (the downs). I find this a useful image in that each of the classifications mentioned above (race, gender, etc.) can be analyzed in terms of its up group and its down group; thus, an understanding of one concept, upness and downness, can be used to illuminate many different issues of justice.

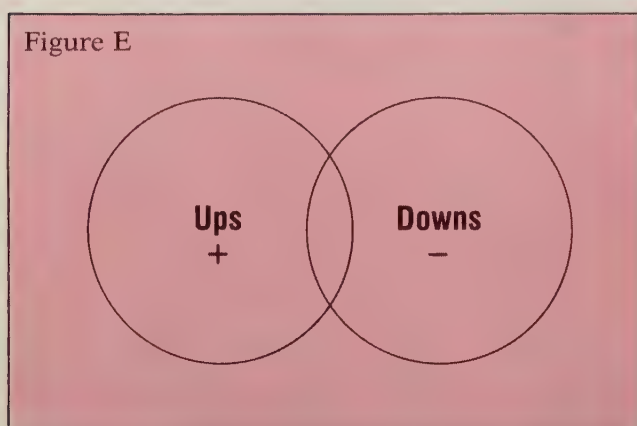
Up Group	Down Group
Whites	People of color
Men	Women
High income people	Low income people
Adults	Children
Middle-aged adults	Elderly adults
Teachers	Students
Heterosexuals	Lesbians and gay men
Clergy	Laity
Christians	Jews
American Protestants	American Catholics
First world citizens	Third world citizens

The list could be expanded almost indefinitely, but the examples here are sufficient to illustrate an additional benefit of this image of up and down. Up and down are fluid concepts, not fixed ones. It is easier for us to maintain positive feelings about ourselves if we define ourselves as victims of injustice rather than as oppressors. Thus, white women generally prefer to think of themselves as victims of sexism rather than as perpetrators and beneficiaries of racism. But while this outlook may help us maintain positive feelings about ourselves, it also obscures the truth. The concept of up and down reminds us that virtually no one is a pure up



or a pure down. We are all up on some dimensions and down on others, and the treatment that we want from the ups, when we are down, is what we are obligated to guarantee for the downs when we are up. The white woman's dream of a nonsexist society helps her to understand the specific changes she must work for to bring about a non-racist one as well. The religious sister who works in parish ministry and is frustrated by the pastor's unwillingness to be a team member can use the specific content of her frustration as a down to learn how to share power with the lay members of the parish, in relation to whom she is an up. These two concepts of pluralism and up/down are helpful for assessing the stages the ups go through as they recognize and confront their prejudices.

## STAGE I: BIGOTRY



At this stage prejudice is most easily recognized. When we say that someone is prejudiced, we most often mean that he or she is in this stage of bigotry. Although we will see that there are other expressions of prejudice, bigotry is its most blatant form and is the place to start our analysis.

As Figure E indicates, the bigot sees very little commonality between the up group and the down group. Those characteristics considered unique to the up group are evaluated positively, and those considered unique to the down group are evaluated negatively. Unverifiable christian beliefs, for example, are called "religion," and unverifiable non-christian beliefs are called "superstition." White teachers who speak only English are called "educated," whereas their bilingual Hispanic students are called "culturally deprived."

Perhaps the most interesting characteristic of bigots is their resistance to accepting similarities between the ups and downs. Even behaviors anyone else would identify as common to the two groups the bigot interprets differently in the ups and downs, assigning positive meaning to the ups' behavior and negative meaning to the downs' be-

havior. A man and woman walking arm in arm are "affectionate," whereas a similar lesbian or gay couple are "flaunting their sexuality." Christians who socialize with their christian neighbors are "building community," whereas Jews who socialize with their Jewish neighbors are "clannish."

Bigotry (particularly in relation to issues traditionally associated with social justice—race, ethnicity, gender, social class, religion) is fairly uncommon in religious communities and, when it exists, is usually expressed only cautiously and among those from whom the bigot expects agreement. The exception to this is found among those in a substage of bigotry that I call "missionary supremism." In this stage the bigot attempts to respond to the church's call for justice without changing his or her basic beliefs about the nature and relationships of the ups and downs. The result is the unreflective missionary, bringing education, religion, moral values, development, or culture to those whom he or she perceives as having none. This person ministers *to*, not *with*, the downs, and cannot imagine that he or she receives anything (except God's favor) in return. An example of the missionary supremacist is the white sister teaching in an all-black city school, who said to me, "These girls have absolutely no morals and can't even speak correct English, but there's no hope at all for the black race if we don't stay in schools like this and try to bring them up to our level."

Largely as a result of the social teachings of the church in the years since Vatican II, the vast majority of women and men in religious life have moved beyond bigotry and into Stages II and III, the two expressions of liberalism. Because the basic tenet of liberalism is that all people are human and therefore basically similar to one another, the schematic representations of these two stages show the circles as broadly overlapping, with nearly insignificant areas of uniqueness for the ups and for the downs.

## STAGE II: DOMINATING LIBERALISM

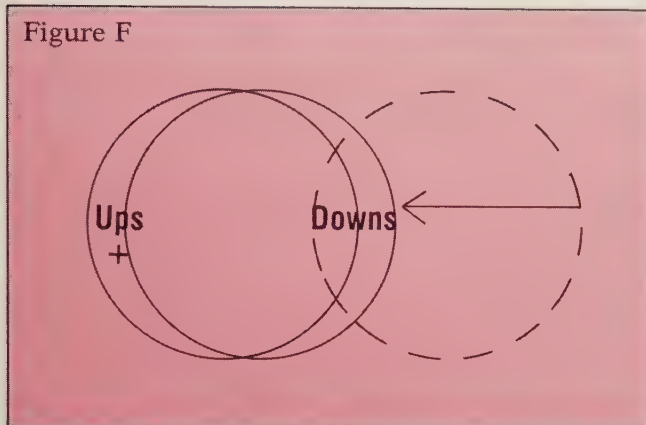
In this stage the member of the up group rejects the bigot's devaluing of the down group but does not challenge the assumption that the up group is right and normal. As the large area of overlap in Figure F indicates, the two groups are seen as virtually indistinguishable, with only the most undeniable differences (such as skin color or anatomy) being placed in the outer crescents. Significantly, however, the large area of overlap results from the downs being almost entirely subsumed within the framework of the ups. As a result, from the dominating liberals we hear comments such as, "I don't think of you as a woman; I just think of you as a human being" or "I know just how you feel about being black. I've experienced the same thing as a Catholic." Notice that in each case the speaker assumes that his or her experience



is standard and is interchangeable with the experience of the other person.

The first statement, in particular, is often difficult for ups to recognize as prejudicial. Most of us have said similar things, yet there are two problems connected with it, and they are the two significant factors that cause many downs to be suspicious of liberal ups. Understanding these two factors can help us understand why the word liberal, which signifies to most ups a person committed to social justice, signifies to most downs a nice person committed to no significant social change.

Figure F

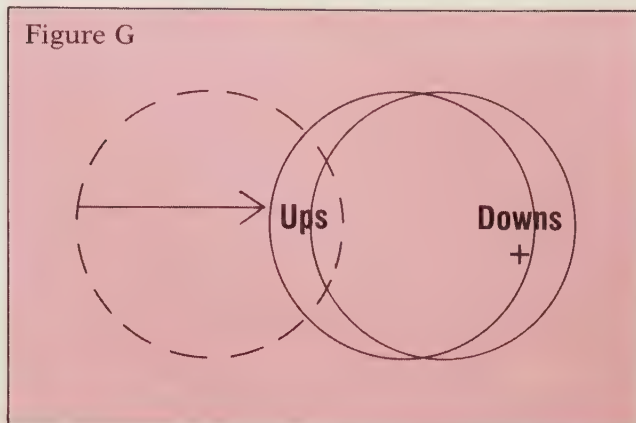


First, the statement "I don't think of you as a member of down Group X; I just think of you as a human being" subtly implies that "Group X" is a less worthy, less desirable category than "human being." After all, we would never think of complimenting someone by saying, "I don't think of you as kind" or "I don't think of you as ethical." The statement is only complimentary when it refers to negative or unfortunate characteristics: "I don't think of you as rude" or "I don't think of you as overweight." Therefore, being a member of down Group X must be, in the mind of the dominating liberal, a negative or unfortunate characteristic, not a positive one. The down who affirms his or her experience as a member of that group correctly perceives the unintended insult in the liberal's inclusive statement and is wise to reject it.

The second factor that causes many downs to be suspicious of liberalism is that the inclusive language "we're all human" obscures an important truth. The liberal up, no matter how committed to social justice, is still involved in and benefits from systemic patterns that oppress the downs. Missionaries can always go home. Antiracist white parents cannot keep teachers from expecting more of their children than of their children's Hispanic classmates. The ups simply cannot shed their upness, and the wishful liberal language that seeks to hide this reality is generally resisted by thoughtful downs.

### STAGE III: SUBMISSIVE LIBERALISM

Figure G



The liberal's world view is based on the belief that group differences are minimal and that all significant human characteristics, all fundamental values, are held in common by members of all groups. This puts the liberal up very much at the mercy of the downs, because as long as the downs say "Yes, I'm just like you," the liberal's world view is secure. What happens, though, when the downs say "No, I'm very different from you" or "No, I hold quite different values" or "No, I come to a very different conclusion"? In an effort to maintain the illusion that there are no significant differences between ups and downs, the up shifts from saying "I am the norm and all downs are just like me" to saying, "The downs are the norm and I am just like them." As Figure G indicates, the area of commonality is as large for the submissive liberal as it was for the dominating liberal, but here the overlap is a result of the ups being almost entirely subsumed within the framework of the downs. In the clearest expression of this stage, the up will agree with any analysis, any conclusion by a member of a down group. Amazingly, ups will agree with analyses that violate their own experience. They will even agree with two mutually exclusive analyses by two different members of down groups.

An example will illustrate this stage. Several years ago, more than 100 women and a small number of men met to promote the issue of ordination of women to the Catholic priesthood. With the exception of one black woman, the group was entirely white and quite middle class. Toward the end of the day-long meeting, one white woman expressed to the group her distress about their homogeneity, her fear that women's ordination was a luxury concern of the white and middle class. There were murmurs of agreement, but then the black woman stepped to the microphone and said, "You don't need to be concerned about this. The color of our skin doesn't mean anything. We're all



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**It is easier for us to  
maintain positive  
feelings about  
ourselves if we define  
ourselves as victims  
of injustice rather than  
as oppressors**

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just people in this together." As she returned to her seat, the other participants gave her a standing ovation.

How could more than 100 people who gathered to say that gender really matters, who think it is an injustice that women aren't represented at the altar, have agreed with this woman's analysis and given it the only standing ovation accorded a comment from the floor? Were they just being polite, or had they stopped thinking?

I believe that in some cases the submissive liberal feels forced to agree with the down's analysis on the surface because that is the liberally correct thing to do. But the liberal knows inside that he or she disagrees and fears sounding like a bigot.

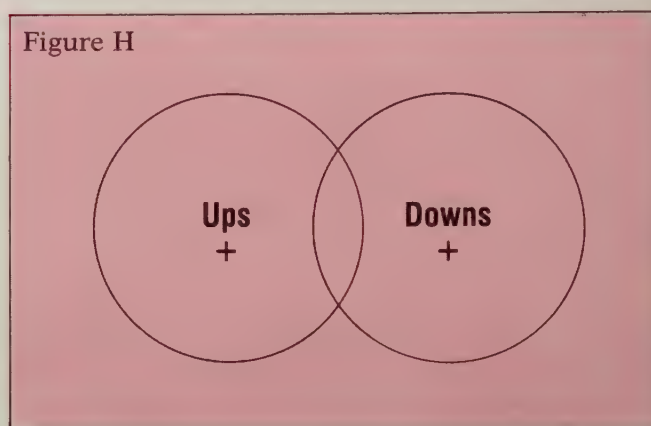
More often, however, I think submissive liberals simply don't notice the disparity between what they think and what the down has said. In order to meet the liberal goal of total agreement between ups and downs, they develop a pattern of automatic agreement with any statement by a down and simply stop checking these statements against personal experience or beliefs. With either of these explanations, submissive liberals give up some important part of themselves to maintain their liberalism.

Stages II and III, the two expressions of liberalism, seem to have a particular relationship to each other that is not common in developmental models. Ordinarily, we would expect to find a person moving from Stage I through II, then III, then IV, and so on, in a linear though not necessarily smooth progression. In this case, however, people seem to alternate a number of times between Stages II and III, apparently finding these changes more acceptable than a retreat to Stage I and easier than a shift forward to Stage IV. Stage II appears to be the more comfortable expression of liberalism, since it supports the deeply-rooted myth that the ups always know and understand

more than the downs. However, when faced with a down who will not fit into the acquiescent role that dominating liberalism requires, the up shifts to the submissive role for as long as is necessary to sustain the appearance that he or she is in agreement with the downs.

What causes movement to Stage IV? Many people, of course, never move beyond liberalism, but as in any developmental model, those who do are drawn forward by their awareness of the inadequacies of the stages they have already experienced. Bigotry is unacceptable to them, the downs won't cooperate and permit them to be dominating liberals, and their own intellect and integrity won't permit them to be submissive liberals. The resolution lies in Stage IV.

#### **STAGE IV: VALUE-FREE PLURALISM**



As Figure H indicates, the value-free pluralist has given up the notion that we are all just human beings and therefore the same. The area of overlap has almost disappeared, and the crescents of uniqueness are quite large. The diagram for this stage is more similar to that of the bigot than it is to those of either of the two liberal stages, with one important exception. For the bigot, the uniqueness of the ups is positive, whereas that of the downs is negative. For the value-free pluralist, all uniqueness is good.

Most Stage IV and V individuals can remember the trepidation and eventual relief they experienced in making the transition from liberalism to pluralism. Trepidation occurs because of Stage IV's superficial resemblance to Stage I. The liberal who edges toward this transition fears that he or she may be becoming a bigot. Relief ensues because as the transition occurs, it becomes clear that differences can be acknowledged without this leading to better/worse evaluations. Cultural relativism provides a route out of the liberal's dilemma, and much of the tightness, the feeling of being trapped that is characteristic of the late liberal experience,



falls away. Up/down differences, which have been resolutely ignored or denied in Stages II and III, are now explored, valued, and highlighted, in the belief that exposure to differences is enriching to all. The United States image of the melting pot, in which differences are burned away in the pursuit of a new unity, is rejected in favor of the Canadian image of the mosaic, in which differences are the very source of richness and strength for the whole.

Value-free pluralism is often a delightful stage for the up. For the first time, he or she is able to be thoroughly open and nondefensive. It becomes clear that whereas most ups think of liberals as the friends and champions of the downs, this is simply not true. Liberal ups do not care about the downs nearly as much as they care about their own *beliefs* about the downs. Because of this, they must always be on guard not to learn anything about the downs that will challenge their beliefs. Obviously, this limits the possibility of a free and open exchange of ideas, experiences, or feelings. Downs who fit the liberal ups' preconceived ideas are rewarded and supported ("He's a credit to his race"). However, any down who does not fit is subtly pressured to conform and, if he or she refuses to conform, is angrily rejected.

The value-free pluralist is able to look back on these past interactions and understand how manipulative they were. Free of the need to force the downs to fit a certain mold, he or she now approaches them with an open mind, a desire for two-way communication and, perhaps, real friendship.

To some readers, this description of the value-free pluralist may sound very positive. After all, anthropologists tell us that cultures must be observed from a vantage point free of cultural bias. Scripture scholars tell us that writings must be understood within their historical context. Humanistic psychologists invite us to affirm that "I'm OK; you're OK." By all of these measures, the value-free pluralist seems to have arrived.

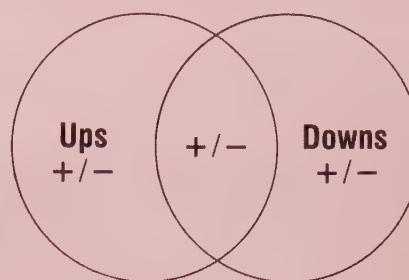
For other readers, the phrase "value free" may ring alarm bells. The notion of cultural relativism may summon an image of moral relativism, "If it feels nice, don't think twice," carried to its social conclusion. These readers may wonder whether there are no absolutes, no standards, by which all groups should be judged.

Which group is right? Each has a piece of the truth, and their concerns come together and are resolved in the final stage.

## STAGE V: EMERGENT PLURALISM

As Figure I indicates, the area of overlap in this stage is larger than it was in Stage IV, though not as large as in II and III. (Actually, the value-free pluralist might have acknowledged this significant amount of commonality, but was simply disinterested in it.) The most significant change, however, is that not only are similarities and differences

Figure I



both the object of attention, but both are understood to consist of positive and negative elements.

The transition to Stage V follows the pattern of each of the previous transitions. When the Stage IV person becomes aware of unique characteristics of both the ups and the downs that do not seem to be positive, he or she is forced to choose between retaining the Stage IV world view and rejecting the facts, or accepting the facts and altering the world view. Eventually, the weight of dissonant facts demands attention. The transition to Stage V is accomplished as the individual acknowledges the negative aspects of each group without losing sight of the positive and, perhaps more important, develops criteria for distinguishing clearly between the negative and the positive. The true emergent pluralist affirms those elements in any group that are justice-promoting or justice-neutral and challenges those elements that are justice-inhibiting.

Some examples may help to make this stage more clear. White American culture has traditionally placed great emphasis on the justice-promoting value of freedom and on the justice-neutral values of education and achievement. It is, however, marred by a long history of accepting racism and other forms of inequality as normal. Black American culture is justice-promoting in the strong family and neighborhood networks that have ensured that no one would go without basic necessities if their relatives or friends had any extra to share. The same culture is justice-neutral in the rich texture of its nonverbal language but justice-inhibiting in the anti-Semitism that seems to be on the rise in many black neighborhoods. Hispanic cultures offer a justice-promoting model in their emphasis on cooperation rather than competition as the preferred form of goal structuring. The relaxed sense of time of Hispanic cultures is justice-neutral, whereas the deeply-rooted sexism of those cultures is justice-inhibiting. And finally, American feminist culture is justice-promoting in its tradition of thoughtful analysis of the systemic causes of sexism; justice-neutral in its affirmation of the



emotional, expressive dimension of life; but justice-inhibiting in its frequent failure to make the connections between sexism and other forms of oppression. In each of these cases, then, the emergent pluralist can find something positive to learn from, something neutral to delight in, and something negative to challenge.

With this perspective, the emergent pluralist is able to approach intergroup experiences, and especially intergroup conflict, with a much more discerning attitude. Neither group is seen as inherently better, but there is an awareness that, particularly in understanding situations of injustice, there are some insights that are more accessible to the downs, and a few that are more accessible to the ups. The downs tend to be more sensitive to questions of power: who is making decisions that affect whom. The ups can often better unravel the various pressures that lead other ups to make unjust decisions. The emergent pluralist is thus in a uniquely strong position when it comes to sorting out conflicts between ups and downs. Credible with both groups, he or she has criteria for predicting which aspects of the conflict each will probably analyze more accurately, and is therefore unlikely to be paralyzed by the groups' conflicting analyses.

Finally, the emergent pluralist position also carries within it a recognition of the fluidity of the concept of up and down. Emergent pluralists understand that no one is simply a victim or an oppressor, but a combination of both. They use the insights available to them when they are down to enrich and enlighten their understanding of the issues on which they are up, and vice versa.

## FACING JUSTICE ISSUES

For all except the most resolute academic, the important question about any theoretical model is "So what?" What is the value in understanding this model, and how can it be used?

For the past six years I have been working with religious congregations to help them develop analytical skills and strategies for responding to injustice. I am heartened by this work, because as our nation shifts to the right, and as the religious right, with its emphasis on personal morality rather than social morality, gains in credibility, I see religious congregations as one of the few groups seriously addressing issues of justice.

Still, I have several fears. First, I fear that social justice may be seen as a passing fad, rather than as an absolute gospel imperative. As one sister said

to me, "No offense, but in the sixties it was communication skills; in the seventies it was justice. I just keep my head down and everything eventually passes."

Second, I fear that the new wave of congregational leaders, many of whom have been elected for their personal/spiritual vision rather than their social vision, may find it difficult to lead their members to prophetic stances on justice issues. Many leaders have come to their positions from backgrounds in spiritual direction, and although they often have a real sensitivity to the inseparability of spirituality and justice, their training does not make them prophetic leaders. Spiritual direction develops listening and responding skills; leadership for justice often demands challenge, persuasion, proclamation, and insistence.

Third, I fear that even the leaders most committed to and at ease with justice agenda may only recognize injustice and prejudice in their most blatant forms, and therefore may not be able to intervene in ways that move their congregations forward. Looking around at their membership and seeing that bigotry is gone, they may believe that they have led as far as they need to in this area.

Two brief comments about the use of developmental approaches for encouraging individual and group growth may help to indicate specific applications appropriate to the congregational leader.

—As with any developmental model, this one is best applied by recognizing the individual's present stage and drawing him or her forward by modeling the best of the next stage. The congregational leader, with periodic access to all members, is in an ideal position to speak clearly for justice in the language most appropriate to each member.

—It is important to understand that members may not reflect the same stage of development in their response to all issues. A member may be an emergent pluralist on race, gender, and religion, but a missionary supremacist on sexual preference and age. In this case, he or she can be drawn quickly to see sexual preference and age as comparable issues of justice, but the critical role for the leader is to challenge that missionary supremacist thinking and make it possible for the member to speak clearly and congruently on all justice issues.

It is my hope the information presented here will remind leaders that injustice continues to exist, not just "out there," but in our midst as well. I hope the information will provide them with new insights about the attitudes that nourish injustice.



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# THE FEMININE MENTOR IN WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT

MARIE BEHA, O.S.C.

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One of the continuing quests in the formation and development of young adults is the search for contemporary, practical role models. In his 1978 study of male human development, *The Seasons of a Man's Life*, Daniel Levinson portrays the "mentor" as an essential role model in the life of a young adult male:

A good mentor is an admixture of good father and good friend. (A bad mentor, of which there are many, combines the worst features of father and friend.) A . . . mentor is a transitional figure who invites and welcomes a young man into the adult world. He serves as a guide, teacher, and sponsor. He represents skill, knowledge, virtue, accomplishment—the superior qualities the young man hopes to acquire. He gives his blessing to the novice and his dream. And yet, with all this superiority, he conveys the promise that in time they will be peers. The protégé has the hope that soon he will be able to join or even surpass his mentor in the work they both value.

. . . a good mentor is helpful in a basic developmental sense. This relationship enables the recipient to identify with a person who exemplifies many of the qualities he seeks . . . enables him to form an *internal* figure who offers love, admiration, and encouragement in his struggles . . . [so that he acquires] a sense of belonging to the generation of promising young men . . . [and receiving] the varied benefits to be gained from a serious, mutual,

nonsexual loving relationship with a somewhat older man or woman.

Unfortunately, the male mentoring relationships described in Levinson's study were seldom available, effective, or enduring. They tended to end abruptly and painfully and rarely progressed to the level of full peer status. Although it had limited data on the subject, the study did encourage cross-gender mentoring. However, it produced no data at all on women mentoring women.

What follows are a woman's reflections on her experience and understanding of what the "mother" and "good friend" must do to be an effective mentor to another woman and how those actions, attitudes, and qualities can make the mentoring process more available, successful, enduring, and transcending in the spiritual formation and growth of young adult women.

## MENTOR AS MOTHER

Mothering has far too often been associated with sentimentalism, overprotection, and the devastating consequences of someone who needs too much to be needed, reducing adults to the dependency of children. Any attempt to reject this caricature risks losing a basic truth, brought out repeatedly by St. Paul, that great spiritual good can



be provided by the parental role model. I want to offer a description of what the feminine mentor as mother must do to be effective in a contemporary setting.

First, the feminine mentor as mother must pass on a clear, fair, and honest community history, not only by teaching it (telling the family story), but also by showing that it still works, by living it to the best of her ability and acknowledging where she fails, in such a way as to give meaning to the present and hope for the future.

Second, the feminine mentor must be aware that her protégées, whether they are conscious of doing so or not, will expect her to embody the ideals she expresses. Yet, the better the mentor represents what she presents, the greater will be the challenge and the heavier the burden for her charges in the work they must do. Thus, the feminine mentor, as "good mother," must prudently present the community's traditions and gently sustain the young woman in her task of becoming a member of the religious family—a "daughter" to her "mother."

The tasks of the "good daughter" are threefold, and often interwoven. She must (1) live and learn to love the traditions of the community; (2) (re)learn her own personal history and redirect her life accordingly; and (3) integrate both of those experiences by thought and prayer so that she will be prepared to ascertain the Lord's will for her.

In the face of these challenges to her protégées, the feminine mentor must realize that the young women can become too intense and involved, revert to old defenses, or overdramatize their struggles. On the other hand, they can be too little involved and make only surface adaptations. In general, in a normal, healthy process of maturation, the young woman must be aware of regressive tendencies toward increased sibling rivalries and excessive peer group pressure. She must also be able to share her own painful memories and present experiences with significant others, especially her spiritual mentor.

The mentor, for her part, must be aware of the identity crisis of her protégée and provide the necessary collaboration and comfort, reassurance and support. She must also realize that by virtue of a uniquely intimate position of authority and responsibility, she can evoke long-forgotten parent-child responses that can cause the young woman bewilderment, chagrin, and even considerable pain. In dealing with this pain, and all other pain related to the mentoring process, the mentor's experience and understanding are crucial, since this kind of distress should generally not be avoided. It demands to be faced, understood, and worked through. If that is done, the pain is a transforming experience and becomes life-giving instead of life-limiting, and the young woman can begin to understand the Mystery of the Cross.

In summary, a good feminine mentor must be

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## **The ability to befriend another is a gift, a grace to be prayed for, and an art one can develop**

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independent and objective; collaborative and caring; willing to emphasize whichever qualities are needed more; and able to admit mistakes, ask forgiveness, and seek reconciliation with a quiet assurance that all these qualities are an obvious and necessary part of the role of the feminine mentor as "good mother."

### **MENTOR AS FRIEND**

The most important single ability for a feminine mentor as friend is the capacity for and willingness to create close personal relationships with each young woman she is mentor to. It is a friendship because both the mentor and the protégée are equally open and equally giving, in the sense that both give all they can give. However, the mentor should be able to give considerably more because of the richness of her experience and the depth of her understanding. Thus, the feminine mentor makes clear from the beginning of the relationship that the ability to befriend another is a gift one is born with, a grace to be prayed for, and an art one can develop. The feminine mentor must attempt to be a living example of friendship and an encouragement to her protégées. Such friendship, in my experience, has the following qualities:

1. The friendship must be essentially generative, i.e., it must pass on and nurture life. It cannot accomplish this unless there is clearly something to be given that can be given unselfishly. The mentor must set the other free to develop her basic identity, without expectation of anything in return.

2. The friendship must be balanced. Taking care of another is both necessary and appropriate, but care-taking needs to be balanced by encouraging independence lest dependency be cultivated or response demanded.

3. The friendship must be open to risk. Communication of community traditions and values



creates a need and demands a capacity for sharing personal experience. Thus, a good feminine mentor must have a strong enough sense of her own identity to be at ease with the intimacies of her own life, so that the sharing of them with warmth, intensity, and humor will be an inspiration to all her protégées to share theirs equally.

4. The friendship must be able to tolerate ambiguity. This means a willingness to live with tension and an ability to live one's way through stressful seasons peacefully. The feminine mentor must balance really caring with staying sufficiently at a distance, so that her protégée can find her own way.

5. The friendship must present the correct image of authority. The effective feminine mentor remains a strong authority figure, and in this context authority means authorizing another's quest for

growth—calling it forth, applauding, channeling, or correcting its direction, but never controlling or competing.

6. The friendship, although unique in itself and not interchangeable with any other, must not only serve as a model on which other friendships can be patterned but also stimulate the protégée to include others intimately in her life.

In summary, I have found that the qualities described above are essential for the feminine mentor as mother and friend. They are described as feminine only because of my own use of them in fostering the personal growth of young women. Available, effective, enduring, and transcending mentoring, still too rare in our contemporary culture, must include all these qualities, whether those being helped to reach fully adult maturity are young women or young men.

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# Moses As A Leadership Model

JAMES FITZ, S.M.

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**T**wenty years after the opening of the Second Vatican Council, Father Richard McBrien points out in his book *Catholicism* that the church is at a turning point from which several directions are possible. Those called to religious leadership positions in this time of transition experience hesitation and anxiety. With no clear paths to follow, leaders make decisions without any assurance that the directions chosen will produce light from darkness or life from death.

In this context, the figure of Moses as a leader of a community in transition presents a strikingly parallel scriptural image. He led his people in a time of transition, from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the promised land flowing with milk and honey. Reflecting on the leadership of Moses yields some insights into a possible leadership style for our own time of transition and crisis.

Perhaps most striking, Moses was willing to give his life for his people even before the dream and the promise were fulfilled. Moses never entered the promised land, never saw the final result of his efforts. A study of history graphically shows that transitions in the church and religious life take time. One hundred years passed, for example, from the beginning of the Reformation (normally dated 1517) until the reforms initiated by the Council of Trent were firmly in force. Today's church leaders will probably not see the final results of the present transition. Like Moses, they must be willing to give themselves to building the dream and fulfilling the promise, even though the dream and the promise will be realized years later.

Second, Moses possessed a strong sense of unworthiness regarding his ability to lead. "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and lead the Israelites out of Egypt?" he responded to God (Exodus 3:11). Later he protested, "If you please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past, nor recently, nor now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and tongue" (Exodus 4:10). Even Moses' past mistakes were not a hindrance to God, for God called him in Midian, the place to which he had fled after killing an Egyptian in anger. In answering his objections, God did not affirm the gifts of Moses, but challenged him to trust, saying, "I will be with you" (Exodus 3:12). Again, when Aaron was given to Moses as an assistant, the Lord challenged Moses to be a person of faith: "Go then. It is I who will assist you in speaking, and will teach you what you are to say" (Exodus 4:12).

Many called to leadership today feel a sense of inadequacy and unworthiness, arising from the reality of sinfulness in their lives and from a belief that they lack leadership qualities. Like Moses, they are challenged to trust. The strength of leaders comes not only from personal gifts and talents but, as with Moses, from the power and presence of God made active in their lives. Biblical leadership is based both on the goodness of the person and on the willingness of that person to be open to the transforming love of God.

Moses also felt ambivalent toward the people he was called to serve. At times he professed his love for them; at other times he asked the Lord, in frus-



tration and anger, to relieve him of the people and his leadership duties. When the Lord became angry with the Israelites and threatened to destroy them, Moses pled on their behalf (Numbers 14:11–19; Exodus 32:11–14). He even asked the Lord to extend to the people the favor the Lord had showered on him: “If I find favor with you, O Lord, do come along in our company. This is indeed a stiff-necked people; yet pardon our wickedness and sins, and receive us as your own” (Exodus 34:9).

Moses’ love for the Israelites did not stop him from having moments of despair and frustration. After being fed the quail and the manna, the people still distrusted the Lord and cried out for water. Then Moses cried out to the Lord, “What should I do with this people? A little more and they shall stone me!” (Exodus 17:4) Later, when the people wanted meat, Moses voiced to the Lord his ultimate frustration: “Why do you treat your servant so badly? I cannot carry all these people myself, for they are too heavy for me. If this is the way you will deal with me, then please do me the favor of killing me at once, so that I need no longer face this distress” (Numbers 11:11–15).

Those in leadership positions probably have similar ambivalent feelings from time to time about those they serve. Provincial leadership, for example, asked by the membership of the province to strengthen and consolidate the apostolic works of the province, sometimes receives no support at all when suggesting the elimination of particular works and communities in order to strengthen others. Or a provincial may be told that a certain problem exists in the community (e.g., an alcoholic religious; a religious unfaithful to his/her celibate

commitment), yet receive no support in confronting the problem because the religious presenting the problem is unwilling to have his/her name used in the confrontation for fear of the consequences. Although feeling a deep love for the community and the people being served, a leader should not be surprised at feelings of frustration and anger in dealing with those same people.

Part of Moses’ frustration may have come from overwork. After observing him daily judging cases for the people, Jethro, his father-in-law, suggested that Moses appoint God-fearing men to share his task. Leaders can easily fall into the trap of trying to lead alone, thinking that tiredness and strain are the necessary results of being a leader. Delegation and shared responsibility, however, are as important now as in Moses’ time.

All in all, Moses’s example helps the church leader to feel more relaxed with a sense of unworthiness and to depend on the power and presence of God in the ministry of leadership. Moses’ story also teaches that it is not necessary to go it alone as a leader, and his story helps leaders to be patient with the ambivalences felt toward those served. Moses challenges church leadership to walk with the community on a journey toward a new and deeper life, a journey that the leader may not personally complete.

Finally, if this leadership is truly a response to the call of the Lord, its effectiveness will be based on the Lord’s promise to Moses and to us, “I will be with you” (Exodus 3:12), the same promise renewed in a special way by Christ among his disciples: “I am with you always, until the end of the world!” (Matthew 28:20).

## MOSES AS A MODEL FOR LEADERS IN THE CHURCH

Dependent on Presence and Power of God

Ambivalent  
toward  
followers

Frustrated and despairing at times

Sense  
of  
inadequacy  
and  
unworthiness

Overworked

Willing  
to  
give  
his  
life



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# When Ministry Becomes Therapy

DONALD COZZENS, Ph.D.

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Cultural and historical circumstances have situated us in an age of accelerated change, and major historical periods of change bring with them the experience of anxiety and a corresponding preoccupation with the psychological dimension of life. What I have to say about contemporary America and its apparent spirit of narcissism is merely an assertion, but I believe that there is ample evidence for such a conclusion. Rollo May, for instance, sees a similar psychological preoccupation at the time of the breakdown of the classical Greek and Roman eras and during the decline of the Middle Ages. As the industrial age comes to a close, our *zeitgeist*, or intellectual spirit of the time, is psychological, therapeutic, and increasingly narcissistic. I am not suggesting that individuals of our present age are less healthy than individuals of previous ages or that modern Americans are necessarily more self-centered than preceding generations. I am simply describing some major characteristics of contemporary American culture and drawing from this cultural overview some implications for ministry and therapy.

In the Fall 1982 issue of *HUMAN DEVELOPMENT*, Joann Wolski Conn and Walter E. Conn began their insightful discussion of christian self-transcendence by pointing to the narcissistic character of contemporary American life. They note that within the last decade Christopher Lasch, in *The Culture of Narcissism*, has forcefully laid bare our preoccupation with psychic well-being. Faced with economic, political, and technological forces apparently beyond our control, and caught up in a culture embracing materialism and consumerism, contemporary America is disillusioned. The present mood of disillusionment manifests itself

in a sometimes compulsive search for a sense of well-being, personal fulfillment, and psychic security.

One of the first critics to identify the emerging therapeutic mentality was Philip Rieff in his books *Freud: The Mind of the Moralist* (1961) and *The Triumph of the Therapeutic* (1966). The challenge posed by the narcissistic spirit identified by Lasch and what Rieff calls the age of "psychological man" has revealed significant similarities in two traditionally distinct professions, those of ministry and therapy. The very social climate of American life, the age of "psychological man" (and woman), has led ministers to see the need for a solid foundation in the principles of psychology, and therapists to acknowledge the decidedly religious overtones of the complaints and concerns presented by their patients. The mutual influence and the growing interdependence of these two social forces becomes more and more evident. Note the ministerial tone in the observation made by a primary care physician as he compares his present practice with his earlier medical work as a resident doctor working in a hospital.

When the 30th of June comes, we can't sign off service notes, turn over the hopelessly demanding patient, the dying patient, the bothersome patient, or any other of our patients who continue to nettle us. We must continue to live with those people and try to provide the support and therapy that they need. [*Psychosomatic Medicine* 42, no. 1 (Supplement 1980): 137]

The present age, then, suggests there will be moments when ministry becomes therapy and therapy becomes ministry.



Americans, until recently, found a sense of meaning in the myth of progress. If we did not find a further sense of meaning in materialism and consumerism, our physical comforts and addiction to purchasing satiated our consciousness to the point where the question of meaning was effectively suppressed. Although we still prize these idols of American life, our society is undergoing substantive changes, not the least of which is the demise of a growth-oriented economy. Our belief in progress and our confidence in the fruits of ambition and hard work have been shaken by the realization that beneath the surface of our society's facade lies a prevailing sense of meaninglessness. Ministers and therapists alike report a sense of meaninglessness or purposelessness as an ever more frequent concern of their parishioners and clients. Our narcissistic behavior is symptomatic of this profound sense of personal emptiness.

Both Carl G. Jung and Viktor Frankl insist that a sense of meaning is essential to spiritual vitality and psychological well-being. A sense of meaning takes us beyond ourselves and allows us to experience transcendence. We apparently hunger for a sense of meaning or transcendence (interchangeable terms in this article) in the same way that our bodies hunger and thirst for food and drink. History has taught us that societies caught up in the experience of profound structural change become preoccupied with the internal world of the psychological. Thus we are led into Lasch's age of narcissism. Jung explains this turning inward as the predictable effect of the breakdown of a society's symbol system, because symbols provide meaning for a given age. However, one is never committed to anyone or to any corporate reality, whether nation, church, or organization, without a symbolic reality present in the object of one's commitment. A narcissistic society, therefore, confused by the breakdown of its symbols, becomes starved for experiences of authentic meaning or transcendence.

In periods of symbolic breakdown, individuals fall back upon synthetic experiences of meaning or transcendence. Substance abuse (drugs, alcohol, tobacco, etc.) and America's so-called "cult of intimacy" are two examples of our misguided search for meaning. The etiology of substance abuse may be partially understood as an individual's search for relief from a meaningless and empty life through a change in the state of her or his consciousness.

Persons caught up in the "cult of intimacy" have discovered that in the intimate encounter with another they transcend themselves and thereby come to know a moment of meaning. However, the proponents of the cult misread the nature of true intimacy. They fail to see intimacy as profoundly gra-

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## Caught up in a culture embracing materialism and consumerism, contemporary America is disillusioned

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tuitous, as a surprise by the Spirit, as a graced experience occasioned by self-surrender, trust, and committed love. On a daily basis, both ministers and therapists are confronted with the destructive force of addiction and the shattering pain of human relationships devoid of intimacy. Ministers and therapists become guides for parishioners and clients in their search for meaning.

In his recent book *The Unheard Cry for Meaning*, Viktor Frankl discusses the relationship of therapy to the question of meaning. For the informed therapist, Frankl writes, the goal of therapy is to facilitate a sense of meaning for the client. In order to heal, the therapist helps his or her client arrive at a sense of meaning. Frankl then points to a truth with profound implications for the minister as well: a sense of meaning in one's life is itself therapeutic. A goal of ministry is, therefore, identical with a fundamental goal of therapy—to help the parishioner or client discover in a changing and absurd world a sense of meaning and purpose.

Therapists, on the other hand, see that the client's search for meaning raises issues of life's origin, human destiny, suffering, freedom, and responsibility—all profoundly religious issues. And ministry is understood as a proclamation of meaning, of God's loving initiative, presence, and saving power in an age apparently devoid of meaning and purpose. The minister, whether ordained, vowed, or lay, proclaims the Kingdom of God through preaching, counseling, teaching, organizing, serving, and reconciling. Through these activities and provision of leadership in worship, the minister consistently witnesses to the truth that human history and our individual histories are filled with meaning. In raising the question of meaning and offering the answer of God's Kingdom and Word, the minister offers healing, even therapy, to a disillusioned and narcissistic society. And the therapist, while assisting an individual to discover a sense of meaning in life, is in a real sense



# A HUNGER OF THE SPIRIT

Sense of meaning, or transcendence  
(taking persons beyond themselves)

is  
essential  
to

Spiritual  
Vitality

Psychological  
Well-being

ministering to a disillusioned and confused client. For the therapist, then, it is a question of meaning through therapy. For the minister it is a question of therapy through meaning.

## A COMMITMENT IS REQUIRED

Both theology and psychology emphasize the need for commitment if an individual is to experience a sense of meaning in life. Yet, in a narcissistic society commitment is often resisted, and when not resisted it is perceived as temporary. For commitment calls us to place God, the Kingdom, our nation, family, loved ones, or friends before ourselves. A committed person is motivated to patterns of living that go beyond the satisfaction of narcissistic goals, even though these desires or needs have their own validity.

The narcissistic individual, preoccupied with psychic security and personal well-being, understands very well that commitment involves risk and is always dangerous to one's psychological well-being. If commitment leads a man or woman to the fulfillment of a sense of meaning, it also promises the experience of pain. This makes commitment a courageous enterprise, and the narcissist simply refuses the mantle of hero or heroine. Disillusioned, narcissistic people have vitiated their capacity for the self-transcendent behavior of commitment. A narcissistic society not only fails to call forth a concern that goes beyond individual needs and wants, it dismisses the very notion of commitment as naive and irrelevant. Disillusioned, self-centered individuals have turned away from the path that

leads to a meaningful life. Jung and Frankl, among others, suggest that the inevitable emptiness of the narcissistic lifestyle offers hope that our society can be turned in a different, more life-giving direction. For if acute enough, feelings of emptiness, futility, and meaninglessness lead people to seek help.

Since the birth of the psychological age, individuals seeking to overcome the malaise of contemporary American life move in one of two directions. They turn to religion or religion's secular counterpart, therapy. Both ministry and therapy play significant roles in the present crisis born of our narcissistic orientation to life. Authentic ministry and authentic therapy challenge the individual to see to it that her or his life is fulfilled and meaningful, transformed by the experiences of transcendence, intimacy, and commitment.

## LACK OF COMMUNITY

Alvin Toffler, author of *Future Shock* and *The Third Wave*, states that the emerging era of cultural history is going to be an age overshadowed by the specter and promise of technology. The rapid development of microelectronics has exercised a staggering impact upon research, information management, communications capabilities, and leisure activities. Early research by Philip Zimbardo at Stanford University into the effects of prolonged computer use, whether for entertainment or for scientific calculations, reveals noticeably withdrawn and introspective behavior in the players and researchers using the computers. We live at a time when commitment is withheld and when early re-



search into the effects of sustained computer use has uncovered a further obstacle to the experience of community.

Both the minister and the therapist regularly address the human need for community. We are sustained in our faith, encouraged to believe, and motivated to love through the experience of belonging. The ministry of the ordained, vowed, or lay person flows from and is mandated by the communal character of God's revelation. Ministry is a call to solidarity, a consistent reminder that we are God's covenanted people. Thus, the minister's role in an age of introspection and narcissism, an age of isolation and alienation, is to offer deliverance from the estrangement of narcissism, through the experience of community, and the recovery of meaning, through commitment and faith.

Therapy also confronts the human need for community, which an age of narcissistic self-seeking and technological alienation makes difficult to achieve. The therapist, if his or her understanding of the human condition is at all on target, understands the anxiety and insecurity that breeds withdrawal, neurosis, and the various defense mechanisms employed to stave off the effort and sometimes the pain of community or family living and interpersonal relationships. The therapist, like the minister, accepts and affirms the client as a person. The therapeutic encounter itself is often the only authentic experience of community available to the client. The therapist, by his or her compassion, affirmation, confrontation, and therapeutic skills, facilitates healing in the individual encased in loneliness and alienation. Therapy that is successful, like ministry, occurs in the context of community. Like ministry, it calls for a true transformation in the life of the client.

## THE THERAPY ACHIEVED

Ministry is therapeutic when it points to the central place of the spiritual in the human drama of

life. It is therapeutic when it calls us beyond ourselves, beyond humanistic fulfillment, to embrace the wisdom of our religious tradition, and reminds us in word, ritual, and symbol that happiness, deliverance, and salvation are found (indirectly) as we strive to be for others and to minister to them in our own pain and emptiness. Finally, ministry is therapeutic when it flows from a life of faith, prayer, and commitment. For whenever the minister is a person of prayer and trust, his or her ministry calls forth the power of the Spirit. And the power of the Spirit is a transforming, or therapeutic, power.

Good ministry, like good therapy, puts us in touch with the "ground of our being," to use Tillich's phrase, which is God the healer. Loneliness, confusion, anxiety, guilt—the very stuff of both ministry and therapy—bring us to discover, in joy and in despair, the God who dwells within.

A disillusioned, narcissistic age will not find healing (and salvation) in the optimism of the human potential movement or in the narrow and antitheological approach of fundamentalist religion. It appears now that God's spirit of healing and truth is working in and through both ministers of authentic religion and therapists whose psychology has not lost its soul. They are the guides to the disillusioned, confused, and alienated of our present age in their search for meaning, community, and genuine fulfillment.

## RECOMMENDED READING

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- Lasch, C. *The Culture of Narcissism*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1979.
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# The Wisdom of Seeking Help

SISTER MARY J. CAIRNS

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**D**riving home one day from a session with a Sister-psychologist to whom I had been going for nearly a year, I began to review what I was doing in therapy, the effect it had on my year, the way I was feeling, and the way I was anticipating the start of another year in a demanding, person-related apostolate.

I found myself considering the question of how religious people feel about seeking help. I suppose I'm a classic example of the individual who never needed to strive to be self-sufficient, because I was born that way. In the religious houses where I lived, I was always the one who knew the most about everyone else's problems and circumstances. I knew the sister who was having family problems and the one who was having difficulties handling her classes or working with the people in her apostolate. I never sought such news; I was just interested and a good listener. I was also a nearly tireless worker, successfully completing any and all projects, assigned or self-initiated.

But a few years ago I began to suspect that I was not the invulnerable one I had consistently thought myself to be. I started losing that confidence after a very upsetting change of assignment, and I turned to an old friend and intimated that I was having problems and really felt the need for help. (The help I had in mind was a sympathetic ear.) She laughed and then told me that I always had

answers for everyone else's problems and certainly must have some answers for my own.

After some embarrassment and hurt feelings, I realized that my friend did not intentionally withhold her sympathy. She just couldn't understand that such a stalwart character as I could possibly have meant what I had said, because of the unshakeable image I had been consistently but unintentionally projecting to my companions and colleagues for years.

That crisis passed after a few more months, and I made new friends in my new assignment. There was one in particular who was deeply understanding of my plight. This relationship, formed with someone belonging to a different religious congregation, was a very satisfying one for me. It was fun. I had no role to play, no history to live up to, no expectations beyond who I was there and then. In other words, with her I didn't have to be the visiting guru. After too short a while, however, the laughter turned to a painful vigil as I waited and watched with my friend while death stalked her and she finally "fell forward into light."

## CONSOLATION AFTER LOSS

The fact that I had sustained a great loss was eased by the fact that I was able to be a significant comfort to another human being whom I loved

dearly. I was consoled even during the time after by good memories and the meaningful support of mutual friends. Darkness did not invade again soon, and I slid rather easily into old patterns of knowing just where I was going and just how to get there.

Next came family illness with its attendant strain. As sickness recurred and weakened my parents, family responsibilities started to weigh more heavily, and irritation surfaced among my siblings. A certain vacuum of empathy existed in my local living situation as well. So often in religious life the strain of family pressures is not understood by those who have been shielded from them by regulations, or by those who have not yet tasted that particular pain.

Problems also lurked within the congregation. Chapters came and went without bringing about the significant attitudinal changes so necessary for the life of a religious family. We talked, but we rarely communicated; we wrote letters and made suggestions, but we were never informed whether such sharings ever reached their destinations. It was like putting letters into a toy mail box: no answer ever came back. Frustrations mounted, hopes weakened, and human resources were strained.

## **NO TIME FOR GRIEF**

About this time I received a transfer that involved both a change of residence and a significantly different work assignment, without any consultation. The day before I took up this new assignment, my father died; but mourning had to wait, not because I was an unloving daughter or an unfeeling woman, but simply because I could not handle the demands of my new position and also allow myself time to mourn the loss. As usual, I succeeded, but I knew my treads were rapidly wearing thin.

The grace of a friend led to some practical help that greatly reduced the crush of those increasing burdens. This friend had been going for some time for spiritual direction to a religious woman trained in that discipline. Sister Anne had found this direction a great help in her prayer life and yearned to make the same guidance available to me. She was, however, very restrained in her suggestions. I was invited to ride with her when she had appointments—invitations that I always welcomed, since I found the place a real refuge for quiet and prayer. One night, on the dark way home, my friend gently suggested that if I wished, I could have access to the same support and growth that she had experienced.

I was not accustomed to searching for help, and I was not generally encouraged by my congregation to seek it. (We worked hard, and that was supposed to produce some magic that would make every-

thing turn out well.) But I took the leap. I requested spiritual direction, and it was so graciously granted me by a religious of yet another congregation that I still marvel at her Christ-like generosity. Her schedule was already quite full, but my need was heeded. No questions were asked; nothing was required of me, except my desire to live a more deeply spiritual life.

## **SPIRITUAL ADVISOR HELPS**

My monthly visits to a spiritual director who truly cared about my development, the obstacles I encountered, and the opportunities I was discovering greatly helped my peace of mind and my outlook on life. At one stage, my advisor suggested that I see a psychologist to help me over some very rough spots in my life. She asked one night, "How would your congregation feel if you asked to go to a counselor?" "They would probably never again take anything I said seriously" was my pained reply. She phoned and made arrangements with a psychologist of her own congregation. These services were offered free of charge, and I was encouraged to make use of them as frequently as needed.

To paraphrase T. S. Eliot, the end has become the beginning for me. Problems and pain are still part of my life, but so are the knowledge and the confidence that I do not have to pretend to be a female Atlas carrying everything on my shoulders. Before seeking help, I had the mistaken notion that anyone who sought counseling of any kind was generally a person who did not want to accept responsibility for his or her own problems. I mistakenly thought and feared that those who sought help became thoroughly and forever dependent on the person with whom they shared their difficulties. Therapy or counseling means taking responsibility for who we are and working with another to change what needs to be changed in us. It is true that there are dependent personality types; it is also true that there are some helpers who might not have the insight to realize that one cultivates another's strengths, not their weaknesses. These reasons, however, do not justify a person's having to shuffle and stumble through months, and possibly years, of his or her life without help. Some things must be borne; others can be rather easily shared and alleviated.

Seeking help has strengthened me in a variety of ways: it has widened my perspective, deepened my understanding, weakened my pride, and stretched my generosity. I can only hope that some who read these paragraphs will also conclude that they do not have to bear countless burdens alone; that life could be richer, fuller, holier, and more fruitful if they would put aside their fears and reach out. It's amazing how many open hands are there waiting to support us.



# AUTO BIO (Mercifully Brief)

JAMES TORRENS, S. J., Ph.D.

Recently I caught myself in a long backwards look. Memoirs time so soon? It did surprise me, I must admit, to find my past few decades rather eventful. I let my fancy play over the possible chapters.

The first would be about seminary days under the Old Dispensation, when those of us still green listened agog to the narratives of our classmates, the vets of World War II. What I remember of myself from these early years is intensity, aspiration, a very anxious groping for balance. I look back with appreciation upon Aristotle, Thomas, a great deal of Latin, some patient mentors, and a piety centered on the Eucharist and on the Sacred Heart. I do not look back with nostalgia.

My theology studies took place in Louvain, on the eve of Vatican Council II. Rays of the dawn definitely showed at our Jesuit theologate, but we suffered through learning. Teaching was antiquated, the teachers wise gentlemen; the shadow of Jan-senius still loomed over the house. I greatly treasure from those days not just my exposure to Europe (we were kept on a short leash, though most people managed to stretch it) but also my classmates from South America and Africa. They helped me perceive that Europe and the faith, or the U.S.A. and the church, were not necessarily coterminous.

I turn the next leaf to graduate school in the mid-sixties at Ann Arbor, Michigan. A heady chapter! It includes my first friendship with impressive Jews, my close association with Sisters in the midst of the renewal of their orders, my elementary lessons in banking, cooking, and automobile care. The S.D.S. (Students for a Democratic Society) took form and Vietnam protest mounted while, on the sidelines, I pored over T. S. Eliot and Dante for my thesis. Of my companions of those days, only about half remained with the Jesuits, or their religious orders, or their spouses. A time of strong winds and waves.

For two years, at a peak time in the Black Power movement, I taught English at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. It was an eye-opening switch to minority and outsider status. It was also a heavy teaching challenge. My fellow English teachers

## "Footstory"

1

on a cliff trail the child  
shielded by wings  
from misstep

2

an immense brash step  
little knowing  
the day full of promise

3

resolute long compass-  
needle steps  
the bystanders winking

4

a climber's picked steps  
he hardly dares look down.  
nosing-offtrail step

5

on a high plane steps wavering  
quick, quick! support!  
the feet as if sinking in

6

fancy step (with flops)  
steps into an unmarked country  
the urge to cut and run

7

step leads to step to step  
as another pleases.  
does a goal approach?

from the North, the first year, were a collection that any novelist would relish; the students deserve credit for having endured it. Thereafter the mixture normalized. I went South with fear of loneliness, ironically the one thing that did not come near occurring. I was suspended by the bishop, bailed out by Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters, and enabled to learn the struggles and heroism of the Josephites, even while causing them some complications. I took from this period an abiding persuasion that the black people above all others—above all incoming groups to the U.S.—need friendship, collaboration, openings, and anything else, except the attitude that their concerns have been all taken care of and that we can sit back and turn our attention elsewhere.

I have spent happy years, about ten, at the University of Santa Clara in California, with my share

of freshman comps to red pencil and committees to sit on, but with ample room for expansion of reading and learning, among collaborators and Jesuit brothers who are prized friends. I have also worried that our fine school is too small a world, that the affluent find shelter too easily in it.

My life story includes also, and quite recently, a chapter as religious superior of the Jesuits at the University of San Francisco. I think of this as a miraculous time—miraculous that they and I both came through it, I with much tangible support from them and some of them with the same from me. Not an easy position for anyone liable to *aboulia* (everyone, after all, is liable to something!). It was a privilege (though people do not flock to enjoy such privileges) to share the University's struggles not just for solvency but also for perspective and for unification of fiefdoms.

A hand is still writing lines in my daybook, and I sense more than ever that it is not mine. This year I spent a fact-finding week in El Salvador, which has thrown me headfirst into troubles, into a bloody mess that one cannot help but make one's own. The uncanny thing about all the above is the sense that the true call and opportunity and drama take place in its midst, somewhere under the surface or at the core. And that is where I sense that my story rejoins everyone else's. Personal details vary endlessly; but the pattern, the sense of who is

at work in our lives, the response asked of us, the wariness we must have to not succumb to activism, the faith and confidence we need, is common. Day by day, persons of adult religious conviction in this era pass through adventures, endure moments of crisis and testing, that make the nightly trials to earn the Siege Perilous look tame.

My own definition, or at least sense, of God is the One who continually surprises. You get into a pickle, and somewhere just over your shoulder you hear a door squeak open. Your best-laid plans go flooey, yet somehow everything turns out O.K. To conclude with an anecdote: I was in Cordoba, Argentina, in June 1981 (their winter) and wanted to hear some tango before moving on from this stage of my sabbatical. I read in the paper that a group was playing at a club, starting at 11:00 PM. Pretty late, but you only live once. By midnight, however, they had not yet arrived. I asked for a napkin and pencil and, with a brandy in reach, began the first version of "Surprise." The musical group arrived eventually, but never did get started by the time my poem and wakefulness ran out. On my way out of the country, at the airport, a young man who had befriended me, Miguel de la Salletta, put into my hands a cassette tape of "Los Chalchaleros," which has served much better than a passing performance by a local group who seemed more interested in the girls.

plans  
long vague sessions  
sage advice  
hurry of detail  
check-off list  
count down  
nerves  
a good laugh  
you?  
why yes

#### "Surprise"

a hitch  
down jacket left  
no poncho  
consideration skipped  
the flashlight  
map, cash  
who?  
come on now  
what pocket?  
don't tell me

or you make secure  
lock  
disguise  
hide  
forget key  
clues  
combination  
hiding hole

so?  
you struggle  
sit, wait  
ramble  
no use  
depend  
keep falling into  
with no resources  
kindness  
finds  
make do  
calamity  
chance and  
pure surprise

what stories!  
yes if we make it  
oh be still



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# Book Reviews

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*Christo-Psychology*, by Morton T. Kelsey.  
New York: Seabury Press, Crossroad Books,  
1982. 154 pp. \$12.95.

*Prophetic Ministry: The Psychology and Spirituality of Pastoral Care*, by Morton T. Kelsey.  
New York: Seabury Press, Crossroad Books,  
1982. 210 pp. \$12.95.

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There is a growing conviction among "helping professionals" that the time has come for cooperative efforts. The formation of a healing alliance among the practitioners of psychotherapy, spiritual guidance, and pastoral care is often proposed in retreat centers, counseling agencies, hospitals, and other settings where the fostering of human growth and health is a major concern. In publications, lectures, and workshops one finds frequent references to the advantages of blending psychologic insights and spirituality.

Many who practice the arts of spiritual direction and pastoral psychotherapy have found the insights of Jungian psychology to be especially helpful in their work. A strong advocate of the integration of psychology and spirituality is Morton T. Kelsey, an Episcopalian priest and counselor who has published a number of books that present a holistic and cooperative approach to the healing endeavor. Through the integration of christian spirituality and the depth psychology of Carl Jung, fruitful avenues of dialogue and cooperation can be opened, Kelsey believes. Now, in two recently published works, he offers a fuller and at the same time more personal statement of his experience and convictions.

*Christo-Psychology*, the author states, "is intended to be a very practical and accessible guide to help people who wish to combine the insights of depth psychology with those of vital christianity." Accessibility has always been one of the virtues of Kelsey's writings. His style is both lucid and readable, laying open the deep and far-reaching insights of Jung for a wide readership. He presents in a clear and convincing way the advantages of

using Jung's emphasis on "individuation" as a paradigm for the journey of the soul toward union with God. The metaphors of spiritual pilgrim and God as companion for the spiritual journey Kelsey sees as applicable to the individuation model, as the process of growth toward maturity and wholeness. The down-to-earth practicality of Kelsey's writings is equally impressive. Whether he is discussing the usefulness of dream work, journal keeping, or a creative use of imagination in the process of human development, he always displays a welcome sense of how these techniques can be used in one's day-to-day life.

What seems most important in *Christo-Psychology* is Kelsey's integration of the strengths in both Jungian and Freudian thought and the application of this integrative view to the spiritual life and the task of the spiritual director. Kelsey's major concern is to show how an appreciation of Jung's thought can open one up to perceive the spiritual world as surrounding and penetrating all of human life. He believes this sense of contact between humanity and spirit—a contact that provides meaning to human actions and events—has been wounded by the materialism of our times. Through an understanding of Jung and the parallels of his thought with classic christian spiritual writers, Kelsey provides concrete suggestions about how to keep contacts with this realm of spirit open and available for use in continued and authentic growth. Those dedicated to the quest for psychologic and spiritual wholeness will find much helpful guidance and wisdom here. Spiritual directors especially, being those who facilitate this ongoing contact with the spiritual, will find support and help for their work.

Of particular assistance is a provocative chapter entitled "Psychological Types," written by Father Kelsey's wife, in which the Jungian view of personality styles and typology is explored. Through the categories of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Jung's contribution to personality theory is elaborated, and its usefulness in the spiritual life is highlighted. All in all, the book provides reliable counsel for all those involved in the spiritual journey.

*Prophetic Ministry* is an excellent companion to

*Christo-Psychology* and applies many of Kelsey's ideas to the art of pastoral care. Through a personal sharing of his own quest toward wholeness and of his experience as a pastor, teacher, and counselor, Kelsey develops further the notion of attending to the spiritual as a crucial element in healing. He sees the development of psychologic skills and the cultivation of spiritual experiences as helpful and complementary tools. Both pastoral and psychologic professionals can benefit by integrating these elements. The book elucidates Kelsey's view that "there is a growing appreciation of the need for spiritual guides who are also trained as pastoral counselors, and therefore know the methods of dealing with individuals and groups in a meaningful way. . . . Guiding people on the spiritual quest would appear to be one of the most important and distinctive areas in pastoral counseling in the decades to come."

Specific chapters on ministry to the lonely, the violent, the dying, and the homosexual help to provide practical suggestions for counselors about the care of people in pain. The integration of spiritual and psychological healing is fully discussed. This book is a clarion call for a renewal of spiritual ministry within the christian churches as a complement to pastoral and psychologic approaches.

In my role as priest-counselor, I have used these books both to support my own personal growth and to aid in teaching and counseling. They have been remarkably helpful and have opened up new areas for growth and exploration. Each merits the consideration of "helping professionals." They are significant contributions to the ongoing dialogue concerning spiritual and psychologic maturity, and they are welcome additions to the growing body of literature devoted to the formation of cooperative, healing alliances.

—**Oliver J. Morgan, S.J., M.F.T.**

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*Solitude and Community: The Paradox of Life and Prayer*, by Dr. Keith Egan. NCR Crendence Cassettes: P.O. Box 281, Kansas City, MO 64141, 1983. 7 one-hour cassettes. \$59.95.

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"The paradox, the truth of our lives, is in a creative tension between solitude and community, between what it means to be a person and what it means to be related to others." In these words Keith Egan, associate professor of spirituality and historical theology at Marquette University, sets the theme of his presentation on the mysteries of aloneness and togetherness in human living. Taped at a workshop sponsored by the University's Division of Con-

tinuing Education, the talks are lively and provocative. I found, while listening to these tapes, that the speaker's enthusiasm for his subject and his empathy with the concerns of his audience elicited within me a sense that I was present at the original conferences.

Egan is no ivory-tower academic poring over learned theological volumes, although he is certainly competent to confer with the best of researchers, especially those concentrating on the medieval period. He has the ability to take hold of the most important christian sources in biblical commentary, monastic history, and classic spirituality and open up their significance to ordinary folk. At the same time, he grants us our own special expertise in the business of living.

These talks urge us to trust our experience, to penetrate to the mystery that is at the core of our individual selves, and to let further mystery break into our lives. Egan sees solitude not as something we have to go looking for but as a possession we already have in the innermost privacy of our created being. He urges us to embrace that solitary dimension, not to alienate ourselves from the demands of others, but to relate more joyously to them. "Solitude has the opportunity, the potential for leading us to celebrate real presence—our presence to creation, our presence to each other, and to God in Christ," he declares.

Egan does not deny the struggle that this embracing of our solitude will demand. He reflects on that struggle through the comments of people as diverse as Evagrius, Guigo II, Francis of Assisi, Bonaventure, Teresa of Avila, Therese of Lisieux, Charles de Foucauld, T. S. Eliot, Dorothy Day, and Thomas Merton. With special delight, he takes us to scriptural passages, to the storytelling of the Old and New Testaments, to the song of human longing in the Psalter, to the Franciscan and Carmelite embodiments of eremitism.

It is refreshing to hear spiritual advice that does not send us into the desert to find God's will as if it were somehow waiting to be discovered there under a sand dune with our name on it. Many of us have false hopes that with enough digging in solitude, we'll find a divine document spelling out exactly how we should continue the rest of our lives. The wilderness experience, as Egan points out, is a challenge to become more responsible for our personal participation in the ongoing creation by an infinite God. He states "We have in solitude a process of intensification. We live with more vigor and vitality. We live with what Jesus came to bring us. . . . We go into solitude and we discover there our needfulness, the limitations of our humanity, and the support that we need from others and, ultimately, from God. We go aside that we may see better all that goes on in life."

If the desert fathers and mothers had been equipped with cassette recorders, they would have



sent these tapes from one lonely outpost to another with a single word of instruction: LISTEN.

—Sr. Margaret Dorgan, D.C.M.

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*The Natural History of Alcoholism*, by George E. Vaillant. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983. 359 pp. \$25.

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Dr. Vaillant is a Harvard psychiatrist currently directing what is probably the most important longitudinal study ever attempted, in itself reason to attract the attention of any student of human development. Growing out of the classic research of Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck on juvenile delinquents, this study follows 204 college men and 456 inner-city boys for forty years. The resulting developmental perspective simply cannot be achieved by cross-section sampling.

Alcoholism is the nation's biggest public health problem and is probably a major factor in more personality, vocational, marital, and criminal crises than any other single cause. Yet it is often missed or ignored, even by otherwise competent professionals. One reason may be that the Prohibition movement left a bad taste in the mouths of both the research scientists (who look too critically) and the rest of us (who just look away).

Vaillant looks critically at the research, both his own and that of others. His scientific caution is laudable, but it does not make this an easy book to read. The alcoholism specialist will appreciate the wealth of qualifying statements and tangential research with which he surrounds every conclusion. Other readers, even professionals, may get lost and not realize the impact of his findings. Alcoholism is still controversial enough that one is tempted to paraphrase scripture with the suspicion that "if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, *everyone* will go forth to battle."

His trumpet nonetheless sounds some very certain notes. Most important: alcoholism is usually not the symptom of a personality disorder or an unhappy childhood; rather, one is disordered or unhappy because of being an alcoholic. This makes alcoholism a primary illness in itself, leading to a drastic switch in our understanding of its nature and treatment. For example, it explains why Alcoholics Anonymous has been more successful than traditional psychiatry.

For 34 years I have assigned my students the task of listing the pros and cons of calling alcoholism a disease. Vaillant exploits this exercise to the hilt, and his conclusion is no simplistic medical model but a concept of the illness as holistic, complex,

and of various types and kinds. Habituation, lifestyles, customs, and sociocultural attitudes combine with hereditary predisposition (in many cases) and cellular adaptation to the drug alcohol, producing a psychobiological addiction. It is not simply a craving or a learned behavior that can be unlearned. This disease or dysfunction achieves what Gordon Allport called functional autonomy, for which Vaillant uses the more current metaphor of the automatic pilot.

The practice of medicine has been defined as the art of doing for nature what nature would do for itself if it could. In this vein, Vaillant stresses that treatment for alcoholism may consist largely in aiding the natural healing processes, which conventional psychotherapy may only hinder, but A.A. definitely helps. Most unhelpful are attempts to condition recovered alcoholics to drink moderately, which have never been successful over the long haul, in spite of the claims of some psychologists. "Controlled" drinking is not normal social drinking, as any alcoholic can testify. Vaillant cites, for example, the equivalent of seven martinis; if that is success, one would hate to see the failures (20 out of 20, in the followup by Dr. Pendery in *Science*, July 9, 1982).

Vaillant's conclusions are valid, and his longitudinal approach adds an important line of evidence in their support, but it is almost amusing to see them heralded by the press as new. Tiebout (1944), Jellinek (1952), Lemere (1956), Milam (1970), and many others, including Vaillant (1977), are thoroughly documented to the same effect in chapters 9 and 10 of *Alcohol Problems and Alcoholism* (Macmillan/Free Press, 1981). His book is a welcome addition to this growing consensus.

—James E. Royce, S.J., Ph.D.

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*Jung and Christianity: The Challenge of Reconciliation*, by Wallace B. Clift. New York: Seabury Press, Crossroad Books, 1982. 169 pp. \$12.95.

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Through the efforts of the Gainesville-based Association for Psychological Types, religious groups and other professionals are growing in familiarity with the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). This instrument measures eight dimensions of human personality as interpreted by Carl G. Jung, and is proving quite useful in promoting individual growth, both psychologic and spiritual, and in facilitating better group functioning. People coming to workshops at our Spiritual Center inevitably desire to delve more deeply into the MBTI. I recom-



ment enthusiastically, especially for persons with broad theoretical interests, Wallace Clift's *Jung and Christianity* for a brief introduction to and sympathetic critique of Jung's psychologic perspective. After sketching a succinct summary of Jung's basic concepts, his view of the structure of the psyche, and the methods of dream interpretation and active imagination, Clift points out Jung's principal contributions to the psychology of religion. He presents the theory of individuation; the problem of opposites; and interpretations of symbol, myth, and archetype. He achieves a harmonious weave in interlacing his own thoughts on human development with copious quotations from Jung.

For me, the most exciting portion of the book is the final section, in which Clift develops the promise of his subtitle, "The Challenge of Reconciliation." A superficial reading of Jung suggests that he has rejected much of the content of christian experience: revelation, Bible, church. Jung was indeed critical of institutional christianity, but Clift demonstrates how Jung's analysis can revitalize many areas of christian thought and argues that it deserves the attention of christians. For Jung (and for many of our contemporaries), the problem of today is meaninglessness. Jungian psychotherapy seeks to heal people afflicted with meaninglessness. Jung's fundamental principle is that "the psyche is a system that regulates itself by virtue of a compensatory relationship existing between conscious and unconscious" (Clift, p. 33). Within this framework of understanding the psyche as a self-regulating system, Jung views religions as psychotherapeutic symbol systems that open up possibilities for persons, as they develop, to receive some direction/guidance from their unconscious.

How do religions forward human development? Religions are the keepers of the myths (to be understood not as what is untrue, but as what is most true). Myths elicit and support a sense of awe before the mystery of being. They provide an explanation or image of the universe and how it came

to be, i.e., a cosmology. Sociologically, myths relate an individual to his group; psychologically, they help the individual learn something about him/herself, because they suggest the proper course for one's inner development. Jung said that the church in its symbol system provides the necessary steps for psychic development. Second, the church can move masses of people, and such a force is needed to prevent the world's self-annihilation. Third, the church is a force against mass-mindedness and totalitarianism, since the church's proclamation requires individual response.

This positive view, however, is balanced by a corresponding triple critique: (1) Although the church preserves the guiding myths of a culture, its frequently antiquated language and systems of dogma conspire to prevent personal religious experience and a personalized appropriation of the mythic symbols. (2) In order to move people effectively today, the church needs to update its language and self-understanding. (3) While the church is against totalitarianism, like all collectivities it tends to lower consciousness.

Jung died in 1961 and thus did not live through the Second Vatican Council and various subsequent ecumenical developments. Clift shows how various forces at work in the churches are already responding, consciously or unconsciously, to Jung's difficulties. Clift also offers a critical reflection on Jung's view of God in *Answer to Job*, in an approach based on a christian's religious experience of God rather than on dogma, and thus within the canons suggested by Jung himself. What religions need, Clift concludes, is not an attempt to incorporate evil into the Godhead, as *Answer to Job* tries to elaborate, but deeper interpretation of Resurrection symbolism and fresh consideration of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Jung is an expansive but simultaneously dense writer. Having struggled through many of his volumes, I appreciate the clarity and brevity of Clift's work. This book should introduce Jung to a much wider and now more appreciative audience.

—William J. Sneek, S.J., Ph.D.

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# INDEX 1983

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Sheila Murphy, Ph.D.

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by Carol Gilligan

Barbara L. Ruggiero, Ph.D.

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for the Transitions of Life

by William F. Kraft, Ph.D.

Joseph J. Hayden, S.J.

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## VOLUME 4 NUMBER 2

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### **Go and Live Some More**

Reverend William F. Maestri

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### **Mary As a Liberating Sister**

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### **Happy You Are**

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### **Book Reviews:**

#### *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*

by Jules J. Toner, S.J.

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by Anthony deMello, S.J.

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### **Formation of College-Age Religious**

Patrick Sean Moffett, C.F.C., Ph.D.

### **Fostering Maturity Through Prayer: A**

**Psychospiritual Pedagogy**

John Carroll Futrell, S.J., S.T.D.

### **Consolation, Desolation, and Spiritual Growth**

George McCauley, S.J., D.Sc.Rel.

### **Book Reviews:**

#### *The Fate of the Earth*

by Jonathan Schell

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#### *The Work Trap: Solving the Riddle of Work and Leisure*

by Martin C. Helldorfer, F.S.C.

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#### *The Religious Experience: A Social-Psychological Perspective*

by C. Daniel Batson

and W. Larry Ventis

Joseph J. Hayden, S. J.

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### **Developing Leaders for the Church**

George Eppley, Ph.D.

### **Are Religious Orders Irrelevant?**

Paul Michalenko, S.T.

and Loughlan Sofield, S.T.

### **Spiritual Growth in Adolescence and Adulthood**

William F. Kraft, Ph.D.

### **Prejudice in Religious Congregations**

Jean Alvarez, Ed.D.

### **The Feminine Mentor in Women's Development**

Marie Beha, O.S.C.

### **Moses As a Leadership Model**

James Fitz, S.M.

### **When Ministry Becomes Therapy**

Donald Cozzens, Ph.D.

### **The Wisdom of Seeking Help**

Sister Mary J. Cairns

### **Auto Bio (Mercifully Brief)**

James Torrens, S.J., Ph.D.

### **Book Reviews:**

#### *Christo-Psychology*

by Morton T. Kelsey

#### *Prophetic Ministry: The Psychology and Spirituality of Pastoral Care*

by Morton T. Kelsey

Oliver J. Morgan, S.J., M.F.T.

#### *Solitude and Community:*

*The Paradox of Life and Prayer*

by Keith Egan, Ph.D.

Margaret Dorgan, D.C.M.

#### *The Natural History of Alcoholism*

By George E. Vaillant

James E. Royce, S.J., Ph.D.

#### *Jung and Christianity:*

*The Challenge of Reconciliation*

by Wallace B. Clift

William J. Sneck, S.J., Ph.D.



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## REPEATING A REQUEST

**A**s we announced in earlier issues of this publication, the Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development has been preparing to offer a new service. Our intention is to develop and maintain a computerized list of hospitals, clinics, and programs, along with professional therapists and counselors, that have in the past been successful in helping members of religious congregations or clergy with problems related to mental health, alcoholism, sexuality, drug abuse, and the like. We plan to make the names of these recommended resources available by phone or mail to anyone desiring access to our list (not disclosing, of course, the name of the person who gave us the recommendation).

Many have written to us already in response to our previous request for help in starting this new venture. For those who are able to assist us but have not yet had an opportunity to do so, we are repeating the following invitation:

If you would like to help us develop a comprehensive list of proven mental health resources, so that we can offer to you and others the service we intend, won't you take a few minutes to write to us and say: (1) I (or someone in my community) was a patient/counselee of \_\_\_\_ (name of therapist/hospital/clinic, etc.); (2) The general nature of the condition for which treatment was sought was \_\_\_\_ (depression, anxiety, alcoholism, sexual problem, obesity, etc.); (3) The provider of helpful treatment was \_\_\_\_ (a clinical psychologist, nurse clinical specialist, psychiatrist, drug rehabilitation center, etc.); (4) The name of the staff member who helped me (him/her) most is \_\_\_\_ (if care was obtained at a clinic or hospital, etc.); (5) My comments on the quality of care received are as follows: \_\_\_\_; (6) The address and phone number of the person/center I am recommending are \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_.

The chance for others to regain mental or emotional health and the ability to function happily and effectively may depend on whether you generously spend just a very few minutes completing the six statements above. And please draw the attention of others to this request—especially those who have personally benefitted from therapy or counseling. To all of you who are helping us initiate this new service, we are deeply grateful.

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